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Mason City Centennial
1857-1957

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MASON CITY

Centennial

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Dedication

This Centennial booklet is dedicated to the memory of the early settlers of Mason City and surrounding area.

In the great surge of pioneers toward new land and new opportunities in the early 1800's there were some who halted their drifting from place to place to establish homes here. The first years in the primitive wilderness were fraught with hardship. It was through their hard work, determination and planning that this wild and unhealthy district was made more inviting and livable. Then others came to form this community.

Mason City is now 100 years old. We can be justifiably proud that here is a most desirable place to live and work. We humbly acknowledge that most of the honor should go to the pioneering families for their courage, their industry and their foresight to settle here.

. . . The Centennial Historical Committee

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AERIAL VIEW OF MASON CITY, ILLINOIS — Taken about ten years ago

Congratulations to Mason City on its Centennial

from the

Mason City Telephone and Telegraph Company

which was 50 years old in January, 1957

We are one of the 283 Independent Telephone Companies in the State of Illinois

The company was organized to take over telephone service provided by two companies then in existence. We are proud to be growing with Mason City and are now serving 1,172 subscribers.

We pledge to give improved service in the next 100 years to the community.

Before There Was A Town

Early settlement along Salt Creek bluff

Mason County was formed from parts of the counties of Menard and Tazewell by an act approved by the Legislature January 20, 1841. All that portion of territory lying between the Sangamon River and Salt Creek on the south to the north line of the twentieth tier of Congressional townships belonged to Menard and before that to Sangamon County.

When the county was organized there were three precincts, Havana, Texas and Salt Creek. Salt Creek precinct contained the present townships of Crane Creek, Salt Creek and Mason City. On December 8, 1857 Prairie Creek precinct was set off from the east side of Salt Creek and the name changed to Mason City in September, 1858.

As Salt Creek precinct included the whole eastern portion of the county before Mason City was laid out and contained two important groves of timber where the early settlers established homes, it becomes necessary to mention those of both the present townships of Mason City and Salt Creek — Swings Grove and Big Grove.

The first settlement at Swings Grove was by Isaac Engle followed by John Powell, Austin and Robert Melton, Michael, Abram and S. D. Swing and Ephriam Brooner. Stiles and Homer Peck settled on Prairie Creek where they built a saw mill and mill dam. The Meltons had settled earlier at Big Grove and after moving to Swings Grove' Austin Melton kept a ferry on Salt Creek and for him Melton's Ford was named. Ephriam Brooner died at an early date and his widow married Rezin Virgin, an early settler of Big Grove. Michael Swing was a school teacher and surveyor and was elected to the Legislature in 1844. Robert Melton was the first Justice of the Peace we find mentioned in or near Swings Grove, while Abram and S. D. Swing were early merchants of Mason City.

The first settlement in or near Big Grove and in Salt Creek precinct was made by Wm. Hagans, followed by Austin and Robert Melton, Robert and Wm. Hughes, Daniel Clark Sr, Edward Sikes Sr., Kinzey, George, Rezin and Abram Virgin, Abner Baxter, John Young, Ira Halstead, Ira Patterson, John Y. Swaar, John and Eli Auxier. In the northwest corner of the present township of Salt Creek a man named Lease settled in a grove called Leases Grove. He was followed by Samuel Blunt, George Wilson and the Moslanders.

George Virgin and Abner Baxter were early county Commissioners. S. D. Swing of Swings Grove and Abraham Virgin were Supervisors of their respective road districts. Ira Patterson was a Justice of the Peace and after the county was formed. He also was the first county Assessor.

The first school house in Salt Creek precinct was built in 1838, was taught by a Mr. Lease and was called the Virgin or Timber School. The first school taught however, was at the home of Edward Sikes Sr. by his daughter, Mary, a girl of fourteen, who afterwards became the wife of S. D. Swing of Swings Grove.

The first religious gatherings in the precinct were at Hagans' house on Salt Creek by the Rev. Mr. Slinker, a local Baptist minister and Methodist preaching at the home of George Virgin in Big Grove by a Circuit Rider named Shunk. The first regular church organization was formed at Big Grove in 1838 by the Methodist Church with Rev. Mr. Shunk as pastor with the preaching being held in the school house.

The first Post Office in the precinct was at Walkers Grove and about 1847 John T. Chase, who lived in the southwest part of the present township of Salt Creek, was appointed Postmaster and moved the office to his home, but retained the name of Walkers Grove Post Office. Mr. Chase died in 1856 and Wm. Warnock Jr., who in partnership with Wm. Young, kept a country store at the farm of the latter, was appointed postmaster. He soon afterward removed it with the store to the little town of Hiawatha about a quarter of a mile south of the Big Grove Cemetery, where George Young had erected a steam sawmill, Edward Sikes Jr. a store, John Pritchett a blacksmith shop and Louis Bishong a shoe shop. There were several dwellings and Dr. Wm. Hall, a physician, located there for the practice of medicine. When the survey of the first line of the railroad struck the place in 1856, the highest hopes of the people seemed about to be realized. However, the railroad went further to the east, Mason City sprang up and Hiawatha disappeared.

In connection with the railroad survey in 1856, John Y. Lane and Wm. Young prepared to lay out a town and Mr. Lane built a large frame house which he designed for a hotel and was unable to finish. That house now stands at 615 West Pine Street in Mason City having been moved there in 1872 by Jeremiah Skinner. Snider's Atlas of 1868 and Brink's Atlas Map of 1874 both of Mason County show J. Skinner, the owner of the NW¼ of the SW¼, sec 14 T20, NR6, presently owned by Mr. and Mrs. Otis Druien.

The old Timber (Virgin) School House was located on the SW¼ of the SW¼ Sec 26, T20 NR6, now owned by Raymond Hayes. Early religious meetings were held here and it was also the polling place for Salt Creek precinct. The judges and clerks for the first election held there were John Young, John L. Turner, Abraham Swing, Ira Halstead and John Close.

In 1857 the Elder Peter Cartwright held a Camp Meeting in a grove on the farm now tenanted by McHarry Lynn. At the same time about three-quarters of a mile south of this place and one quarter of a mile east of the Fred Housworth farm residence was the scene of the murder of a man named Metzker. Wm. (Duff) Armstrong and James Henry Norris were indicted at the following term of Court. At the trial in Beardstown, Abraham Lincoln, through friendship for the Armstrong family, defended Duff and secured his acquittal, while Norris served a term of eight years in the penitentiary at Joliet.

THOSE THINGS that are good for Agriculture ... are good for Mason City

Mason City Is A Farm Community

- **Its Welfare Is Based On Agriculture.**
- **Those Things That Promote Farm Prosperity are Desirable for Mason City.**

Farmers may or may not be entitled to a Subsidy or to Parity Payments, or Soil Bank Returns, But certainly Farmers are justified in demanding some form of EQUILIZATION of Earning Potential.

From my own point of view this word is important — EQUALIZATION.

Equalization does not mean the same thing as Subsidy or Parity.

It should be understood that farm prices are not necessarily low but low in what they will buy. Farmers have been put at a disadvantage by laws by the dozens that have increased costs but not returns. While farming expenses have been increased by laws, only ineffective legislation has been provided to compensate for the increased expenses brought about by laws.

Farmers are Entitled to Some Form of EQUALIZATION of Income by Law

Consider these laws that have increased farm costs but have given the farmer little or nothing in increased earnings — only higher costs. It has all been done by laws that have nothing to do with farming.

Consider:

Immigration Laws: Immigration is limited by law. No objection is raised here to immigration restriction, except that this lack of low cost labor has increased the cost of all articles and services that farmers buy.

Tariff Laws are designed to increase costs by limiting cheaper imports.

The Cost of unemployment and Social Security laws and Minimum Wage laws and many others is simply added to the prices the farmers pay for goods and services. A chain reaction is set up by these many laws so that each reacts with the others to further increase costs.

These things are mentioned because the choice of a word often influences thinking and it is my belief that the use of the word EQUALIZATION is important in matters pertaining to equalizing farm income.

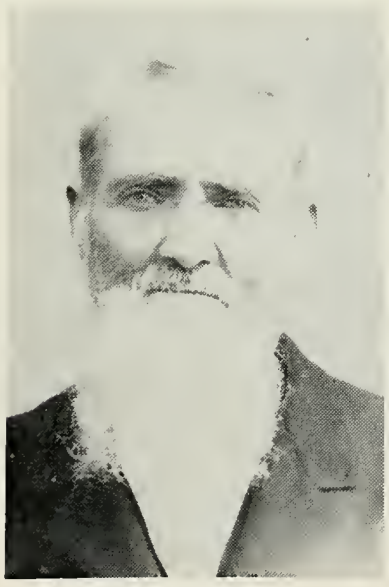
Again I say that those things that are good for Agriculture are good for Mason City, Illinois.

... Currey Dearborn, Mayor

History of Mason City, Illinois

On the 29th of September, 1857, a plat of the Original Town of Mason City was filed in the Recorder's Office at Havana, including thirty-seven full and twenty-two fractional blocks. The full blocks were 320 feet on each side and divided into fourteen lots each. Two of these lots, 20 by 150 feet, form a twenty-foot wide middle strip running east and west. The other twelve lots in each block are 50 by 150 feet, leaving a twenty foot alley extending north and south. Streets are eighty feet in width, and alleys of twenty feet with the exception of the one running through the blocks between Tonica and Main Streets and from Court to Pine Streets are forty feet wide. Lots are numbered from north to south in each block commencing at the northwest corner with lot 1 and ending in the southeast corner with lot 14. Fractional blocks mark the grounds set aside for the hoped for railway. Block 30 was reserved as a public square and Block 36 set aside as a park.

And so, during the month of September in the year 1857 was the survey of Mason City made by E. Z. Hunt with the assistance of John M. Sweeney on land owned by George Straut, a man of considerable foresight abetted, perhaps, by his status as an influential member of the Board of Directors of the Tonica, Petersburg & Jacksonville Railroad. The T. P. & J. had, during the year or two previous to 1857, surveyed two routes northeastward from Jacksonville and Petersburg, thus causing a considerable amount of rumor and land speculation along the survey lines. Towns of eager imagination sprang from every section and land trading flourished — all to burst in the clouds when a third and final route was surveyed, and Mr. Straut had his jackpot.



Richard Proctor

In 1864 there were 350 inhabitants in Mason City when a census was taken in view of Incorporation. The ticket elected was as follows: Richard Proctor, president; George Young, clerk; trustees — Richard Proctor, C. H. Grant, C. Hume and J. Riggins. Mr. Proctor was the greatgrandfather of Harry (Rosie) Proctor and there are three generations of Proctors now living in Mason City Township.

Prior to 1849 this land had been open land, available to anyone with the ability and initiative to settle upon it. In that year this was done by a man named Maloney who entered his claim at the United States Land Office in Springfield. Mr. Maloney, an Irishman, built a log cabin on a forty acre tract to the northwest of what was later the Oringinal Town. He improved this tract and erected sod fences around it. The sod fence of those days was commonplace. The dirt from a trench usually about two feet across and two feet deep was piled into a narrow and high ridge which was then covered with sod to prevent rains from washing the ridge. Maloney departed his brief appearance in Mason City history when he conveyed his lands to Straut before the rail line was determined and Straut laid out his city.

Additions to the Original Town were made in 1866 when plats for Strawn's Addition and Elliot's Addition were filed. Rosebrough's Addition was surveyed and the plat filed in 1867. The following year William G. Greene, of Menard County, Governor Richard Yates and John Mathers of Morgan County, filed the plat of the Northeast Addition. Block 11 of the Northeast Addition and the east half of Block 7 of the West Addition were set aside for schools. The School Board subsequently purchased the west half of Block 7, thereby making the entire block available for school purposes.

The land upon which Maloney entered and upon which Straut planned his city is described by Mr. J. C. Warnock, editor of "The Mason City Independent", in an editorial in the December 22, 1871 issue of that paper, thusly:

> "Fifteen years ago the present site of Mason City was, in autumn, a waving and, apparently boundless sea of blue stem prairie grass, so high that, in many places, a man on horseback could not be seen one hundred yards distant. Wolves had their dens in the ridge where High Street now runs, and night was made hideous by their howls. Deer, in great herds, might be started up at any time, but their course could only be known by the parting of the tall grass. Every fall the whole face of the country was swept over by fire, the flames of which would reach high up toward the heavens, then swoop down, reaching a hundred feet ahead, and taking into their grasp the tinder-like material. None but those who have seen our prairie fires of fifteen or twenty years ago can comprehend their magnificent grandeur.
>
> About a year before Mason City was laid out, a man with a team was so nearly overtaken by a prairie fire, a couple of miles west of this place, that he was compelled to cut his team loose from the wagon, jump upon one of the horses, and "lay whip" for his life. He succeeded in finding the irons of his wagon afterwards. But such scenes, in this country, are now numbered among the things that were. The tall prairie grass has been made to give way to wheat,

65 Years of Progress!

The upper left hand picture shows the Main Office Building of the Grandy Lumber Yard at the turn of the century. (Note Mr. Grandy standing in front of the office).

The upper right hand picture shows Grandy's Main Office and Warehouse which stood until early 1953.

On March 14, 1953 the New Offices and Display Room, shown in the bottom picture, was dedicated.

As during the past century
GRANDY'S will continue to play an important role in making
Mason City a better place to live during the next century.

W. A. Grandy Co.

Building Materials and Coal

206 East Chestnut Street — Telephone 51-M — Mason City, Illinois

corn and oats. The once broad expanse of open prairie is now divided into fields in cultivation. Land that was then for sale at $1.25 per acre, is now worth from $50 to $100. In the summer of 1856, in July, the engineers of the Tonica & Petersburg Railroad ran a random line about a mile west of this place, crossing Salt Creek near the then little and now defunct village of Hiawatha, vulgarly called Slabtown. A short time after, another line was run further east, which forever blasted the hopes of Hiawatha as a railroad town."

Sale of Lots

So, on this "sea of blue stem prairie grass, so high that, in many places, a man on horseback could not be seen . . ." Mr. Straut had laid out his city. To realize on his investment, he advertised a public sale to commence on September 27, 1857, and which was delayed to September 30.

In spite of the fact that there were no roads and very few beaten paths through the prairie grass, some one thousand people gathered and had enough of the spirit of the future to pay from $75 to $300 for lots, the higher amounts going for the choice lots where the "business" district was planned. In all, the sale realized about $25,000. David Dare purchased lot 14, block 14, on the northeast corner of Chestnut and Menard streets, and in the fall of '57 proceeded to erect the first building in the new town, a blacksmith's shop which was to be of brief existence.

Dr. J. P. Walker

Pioneer physician and surgeon of the Mason City area. Helped lay out the town before the lots were sold. Organized Co. K. at start of the Civil War. Was Village President at the time Mason City was organized by an ordinance approved April 7, 1866.

Shortly after Dare started building his shop, Henry Keefer, who owned one of the two houses visible at the time of the sale, erected a two-story frame building on fractional block 13, on the west side of Tonica street. The following January, A. A. Cargill and W. L. Woodward opened a general store in the lower floor. This building, although used for mercantile purposes for a few years only, has quite a history of firsts. Here, when Mr. Cargill was appointed Postmaster in the spring of '58, was situated Mason City's first Post Office. Here, also, was opened Mason City's first public school with Miss Rhoda Allen as teacher. Here, in 1864, Mason City Lodge No. 403 A.F. & A. M. was organized, and in 1866 the first newspaper was started by J. M. Haughey and Sheridan Eulass who were operating a picture business. Also, the first religious services were held in this building with Rev. Holtsclaw, a Baptist minister from Crane Creek, officiating. Other denominations also used the building. This building remained in existence until 1931, seventy-four years, before being torn down. It was moved, however, to the back of the lot now occupied by the Arlee Theatre and used as a blacksmith's shop during its latter days.

Straut, in the fall of 1857, gave the third lot north of Chestnut and the west side of Main street to William Hibberd on the condition that he build a hotel thereon. This Hibberd did — a small, frame building. He engaged Henry Howell, a builder, and a few Petersburg men, and started work on December 1, 1857. On December 21st Mr. Hibberd and his family moved into the yet unpainted and unplastered but otherwise completed structure. The optimistic Mr. Hibberd had announced his "Grand Dedication Ball" for Christmas night and, true to his word, over three hundred guests, some from as far away as Peoria, Pekin and Petersburg, assembled. The ball was held in the two-story Keefer building with two string bands to keep the dancing going from 7:00 p.m. Christmas night until dawn next morning. The Hibberd House was busy all night long catering to the guests whose appetites were such that their host had to go to Delavan the next day to replenish his larder. This building was torn down in 1909.

Hibberd's hotel was quickly followed by another frame building erected as a hotel by Henry Keefer and operated by Jeremiah Dietrich. The same year, 1858, the Sutley House was opened by John Sutley on the northeast corner of Tonica and Chestnut. Sutley decorated his sign with the figures of two lions and the hotel was promptly dubbed "The Lion House."

Other buildings followed and for the first three years of its life Mason City grew rapidly considering the hard times of the country generally. By 1860 there were thirty-four houses in town. J. M. Haughey, editor of the MASON CITY TIMES, lists them in the first edition of his paper on December 25, 1866, as follows:

"The number of houses in town were 34; consisting of Keefer's store house, Hume's store house, Hunt & Porter's dwelling, Sutley's hotel, Swing's store, the brick building afterward owned by Mike Reed, Cooper's, now Proctor's house, Dietrich's, Hesse Diamond's, the Scott House, kept by Jerry Dietrich, Patterson's house, Cottrell's drug store, Hibberd's hotel, S. Swing's house, B. A. Rosebrough's, Mrs. Richey's, Mr. Jerry Riggins', Charles & Lyburger (now where Mr. Wilson lives), Joseph Taylor's, Lee Keefer's,

COMPLIMENTS OF

The Farmers Grain and Coal Co.

Mason City, Illinois

FARMER OWNED FARMER CONTROLLED

Pioneers of Cooperative Marketing in the State of Illinois

1899 **1957**

Original Board
1899

W. T. Ainsworth, President
C. A. McHarry, Secretary Pro Tem
O. C. Hartzell, Vice-President
George Lampe, Director
Elias Hull, Director
P. W. Thomas, Director
J. A. McCreery, Sec'y-Treas., Mgr.

Present Board
1957

Henry Becker, President
Fred Hilyard, Vice-President
Lloyd Swaar, Director
William Rabbe, Director
Ray Douglas, Director
Stanley Martin, Director
Charles C. Jones, Sec'y-Treas., Mgr.

Original Capitalization . $5,000.00	**Present Capitalization $100,000.00**
Original Members 70	**Present Members 445**
Original Capacity . . . . . 30,000 bu.	**Present Capacity . . . . . 265,000 bu.**

Total Savings returned to members $286,620.00

Market Your Grain Cooperatively

Green Marked Coal **Critic Feeds**

"There is no substitute for a Farmers Elevator"

Combs (now where Ridenour lives), Miss J. Moslander's Ed Gilbert's, Dorrill's house, Dr. Walker's (where J. Cease now lives), George Young's, C. Broker's, J. A. Hess', School house, Andrews', Phinney's, John Burnet's, Wesley Master's (where A. Zimmerman now lives), Widow Garber's house.

The increasing hard times and the start of the Civil War slowed expansion almost entirely until 1863 when some building started again. This continued at a gradually increasing pace until 1867 when a period of great prosperity started.

The early merchant sold everything needed by the people of his day. His stock included dry goods, groceries, hardware, machinery, boots and shoes, hats and caps, paints, oils, clothing, medicines and many other things. These he exchanged for money, livestock, cord wood, furs, hides, poultry, butter, eggs, fruit, grain and other produce. Lumber and building materials were brought in by wagon from Havana and Pekin at great profit. Mail deliveries were uncertain during the first three years. Mail was sent to Petersburg where it was picked up by Edgar Hunt, hired by the people of this area for this purpose, for once-a-week delivery to Mason City.

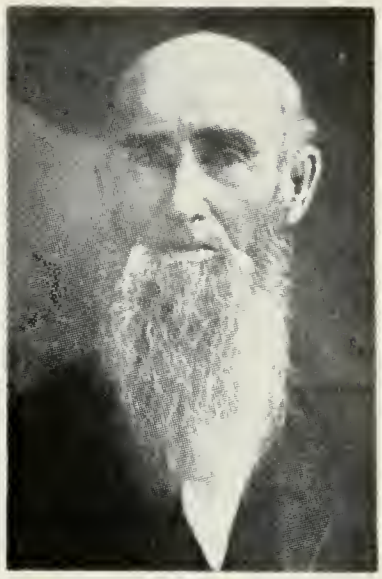
First Train to Mason City

In spite of the establishment of the town and its rather remarkable growth on the basis of a proposed railroad line, it was not until July 4, 1867, almost ten years after filling the plat, that the first locomotive arrived on the line which had then been completed from St. Louis and Petersburg to the south edge of town. This was a gala occasion indeed with Mason Citians greeting the two hundred excursionists from Petersburg and other points along the way, and was climaxed by a free-for-all between the railway construction hands and the celebrating locals. Later that year the line was completed through to Bloomington and this area was opened to commerce with the big markets to the north and to the south.

Mason City boomed. Buildings and homes were built in great numbers, business and agriculture prospered. Within twenty years of its founding, its people numbered two thousand — and the boom was over.

In the heyday of the boom Mason City, through a special charter act of the 1868-'69 Legislature in Springfield, was incorporated as a city. Many of the citizens were opposed, and it appears that the action was promoted by a few who sought it covertly. However means, the act was accomplished, and the first elections were held in April, 1869. T. J. Watkins was elected Mayor; Thomas Lamoreaux, City Judge; S. N. Hornbuckle, City Marshal; William Warnock Jr. City Collector; Dr. I. N. Ellsberry, Alderman First Ward; J. C. Montgomery, Alderman Second Ward; S. D. Swing, Alderman Third Ward; Dr. J. A. W. Davis, Alderman Fourth Ward. Officers appointed by the Council were Dr. J. A. Walker, Treasurer; S. N. Hornbuckle, Assessor; and G. W. Ellsberry, Clerk.

The Township Treasurer reports in 1879 that the average number of school months was seven and one-half and that the total number of pupils enrolled was 509. Twelve teachers were employed, three males and nine females. The highest paid male teacher received $100 per month, female teacher $45. The lowest paid male $30, female $27.50. The total school expenditure during the year was $6,252.03, of which amount $9.90 went for repairs and improvements and $6.40 for furniture.



Elder J. M. Haughey

Elder J. M. Haughey and. W. S. Walker were the proprietors of Mason City's first regularly published newspaper "The Mason City Times." Number One, Volume One of this predecessor of the Mason City Banner Times was dated December 25, 1866.

Elder Haughey was the first minister of the Christian Church at Mason City and spent a long and eventful lifetime in the service of God in Central Illinois.

Mason City business men were compelled to expand their operations rapidly during the early years to keep pace with the town, and many specialized businesses were started to supplement the early general stores, drug store, implement dealers, a steam grain elevator, bakeries, butcher shops and a picture gallery appeared to mention a few. The day the railroad arrived, July 4, 1867, saw the first issue of the Mason City News, the first newspaper of consequence published in Mason City. The News continued until 1871 when the name was changed to the Mason City Independent. Late in 1871 the Mason City Journal was founded, but its existence was brief and few copies are known today. The present Banner Times came into existence on August 1, 1918 when the Banner, edited by W. W. Milby and the Times, edited by Ben C. Rickard were consolidated and a linotype purchased.

A Second Railroad

The first railroad had opened the markets to the north and south in 1867, and shortly thereafter the Indianapolis, Bloomington & Western Extension Railroad was completed between Urbana and Havana. This occurred in 1873 and put Mason City into easy contact with the Illinois River at Havana and the broad lands to the east. In 1879 this railroad went bankrupt and sold out to the Illinois Central, its present operator. The roadbed has recently been strengthened and the route promises to be of considerable importance to Mason City's future. Long trains of loaded coal gondolas from the south-central Illinois coal fields traverse the line twice daily to the Havana Coal Dock on the Illinois River where the coal is dumped into river barges, then to be delivered

The White Barn

ELLEN DEARBORN, Owner

On — State Route No. 10

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MASON CITY, ILLINOIS

40 Miles South of Peoria.

32 Miles North of Springfield.

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Located in the Blacksmith Shop building formerly owned by Sid Branch

You can find here the largest and most varied selection of Antiques and Collectors Items in Central Illinois

You will find here hanging, coach, hearse and other lamps; pressed, cut, colored and blown glass; china and pottery; clocks; silver and jewelry; Swiss and Regina music boxes and hand organs; iron; brass; copper; tin and wooden items; toys; dolls; still banks; post cards; buttons and miniaturia; buggies and sleighs; guns and cross bows; Primitive Americana; pine, period and Victorian furniture etcetera.

Wooden cigar store Indians, cigar store Turk, Austrian Naval Office with beehive in his belly, harness maker's horses, barber pole, huge blacksmith's bellows, watch repair signs are some of the many unusual items awaiting you.

Do write us your specific wants if you are unable to visit us. We answer promptly all inquires. If we do not have what you want, we will search for it for you. No order too small for our especial attention.

☆ 1957 Calendar Plate, 10", Mason City, Illinois Centennial, blue and white. — $3.50 prepaid.

Imported from Staffordshire, England

Lids and Bases, Glass and China, Etcetera: Please refer to Kamm's or Lee's books for pattern glass whenever possible, or draw a picture or take a rubbing of design and give exact size of part needed. We do have a reference library so that you can refer to other books of milk glass, china, etcetera.

Six Cents Each for the Following Lists

Banks, Bennington, Blue Willow, Carnival Glass, Calendar Plates, Clocks, Cruets, and Syrups, Cut Glass, Dolls and accessory items, Flow Blue, Guns, Haviland, Jewelry, Lincoln Memorablia, Majolica, Milk Glass, Musical Items, Nautical Items, Penny Glass Candy Containers, Tea Leaf Lustre Ironstone China, Toothpick Holders, Toys and Games, White Ironstone and Semi-Porcelain.

Dealers, Decorators and Curators --- You are especially invited to come in and make your selection from our large stock.

to the great electric generating plants in the Chicago area. The north-south route is now operated by the Gulf, Mobile and Ohio Railroad system.

At Intersection of Two Hard Roads

Route 66, some nineteen miles to the east of Mason City, is now the main highway between Chicago and St. Louis, but it was not always so. For a short time "The Lone Star Route", (State Route 24) now Route 29, was the only hard road connecting these two cities. That section of this route connecting Peoria and Springfield was built in 1919-1920 and was dedicated in Mason City on December 22, 1920, with Governor Frank Lowden as the principal speaker. This same year the pavement on East Chestnut street was laid to the city limits. In 1924 and 1925 East Pine Street from Main to Tonica and all North Tonica were paved at a cost of $50,000, financed by the sale of Paving Improvement Bonds. The present Route 10, formerly Route 43, from Havana to Mason City was built by the Globe Construction Co. of Hammond, Indiana. Work on the stretch between Easton and Mason City was started August 25, 1927, but was held up by a right-of-way dispute near Teheran, and was not completed until 1928. The route east from Mason City, originally Route 120, now Route 10, was built by Cameron & Joyce in 1931. Work started at the east end of Chestnut street on May 4, 1931, and was completed that summer.

Thus, century-old Mason City is the focus of good highway and railroad transportation from any direction. The promised resurfacing of Route 29, one of the earliest paved roads, will make Mason City a highway center of considerable importance.

Mason City Water Works

During the early years a public well and water tank were dug and built with the tank high above ground and filled by a windmill. This tank served the public at the southeast corner of Chestnut and Tonica streets until May of 1893 when it was removed to the rear of the lot occupied by the old City Hall, about 145 South Main street, where it served as a hose house and bell tower. It was replaced by a water works system servicing the town from wells, standpipe, and steam power pumps located at the present water works site on North Tonica street.

During the term of office of W. Harold McCreery, the present Postmaster, as mayor, a new steel water tank was built at a cost of $16,365. The Chicago Bridge and Iron Company erected the tank which was accepted by the city on May 22, 1946. Financing was by means of $18,000 Water Revenue Bonds. The system was further improved in 1956 by the installation of larger mains and the extension of the system to new additions to the city under the mayorship of H. Currey Dearborn.

FINK PHOTO

City Council of City of Mason City — 1957

Seated (left to right): James Biggs, Alderman Second Ward; Ray Montgomery, City Clerk; H. Currey Dearborn, Mayor; S. P. Wunderle, Alderman First Ward. Standing (left to right): H. J. Snyder, Alderman Second Ward; George A. Doggett, Alderman First Ward; Harry Vaughn, Alderman Third Ward; Dale Smith, Alderman Third Ward.

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- DOZER AND SCRAPER: Road Work
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R. Allen Photo

Mason City Volunteer Fire Department

Top Row: (left to right) Carl D. Tomlin, Roy Bowersock, Russel Tucker, Richard Berberet, Howard Lockenour, Stanley Schulz and Robert Bowersock. Front Row: Vernon Lockenour, Stanley Wilkinson, Clyde Cufaude, Roy Huffman and John Squire. Other members of the department not appearing in the picture are Vernon Warren, John Carey, Sam Boston, August Tackman Jr., Robert Wilcox, Lewis Dutz, James Wasilewski, Robert Bergman and Richard Salesman.

Mason City Volunteer Fire Department

The first fire engine was purchased at a cost of $1,700 in March, 1874. This was a Champion chemical engine and was the first of many to fight Mason City's fires. It fell somewhat short of perfection in one of its first tests however, when it gave out during a fire at the John Burn's house in October, 1874, and could not be recharged in time to save the house. The fire company received uniforms in June of 1875. The newest fire engine was purchased in October, 1954, and has proved its worth in two big fires since then. The first was at the Faber Industries plant south of town and the second was when the Leslie D. Day building at the corner of South Tonica and East Elm streets burned in February, 1957. In each fire local firemen, aided by equipment and men from nearby towns, performed superb service in preventing the fires from causing much more damage than they did. Many other fires, causing considerable damage have occurred in Mason City during its hundred years. Besides the two recent one mentioned above, and the early school fires there were damaging fires such as the one which destroyed Roy Gardner's hotel and the Banner Times newspaper office during the night of January 8, 1920, destroying the priceless bound copies of that newspaper covering the years from 1910 to 1920. The G. D. Sutton Seed Corn Co. building was destroyed by fire in 1927. Early in the morning of March 22, 1928 fire raged through the upper story of the Legion Hall building which, then as now, housed Lee Brothers Department Store in the corner ground floor store room. This fire was beyond control by the time the town could be aroused and fire equipment brought to the scene. Assistance was called from Petersburg and Peoria, but it was 7 a.m. before the fire could be put. out. The fire sale that Lee's put on in the room now occupied by McAfee's Tavern, 134 East Chestnut, following the fire still stands as the biggest this city has ever seen. Another important fire occured in the early morning hours of February 28, 1946 when three buildings on South Tonica street were burned to the ground. The buildings housed the Mace Implement Co. and Mills Tavern. On Sunday afternoon, February 8, 1948 the middle section of the building now owned by Faber Industry, south of the city limits was gutted by fire.

Mason City Rural Fire Department

The Rural Fire Department was organized April 22, 1946, following a meeting called by Fire Chief John P. Carey. Its splendidly equipped fire truck was received and tested September 25, 1946. Since that date it has assisted in all the major fires in Mason City as well as serving the surrounding rural area in a most satisfactory manner. Both departments are housed in the City Hall building with convenient access to any part of the town and community.

Cluster Lights Installed

The Cluster street lights were installed in the main business district in 1914 with money raised by private contribution. Additional lights were installed in 1938 and paid for from license money that had accumulated. Both

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of these improvements were made during terms of office of W. G. Burnsmier as mayor. The 24 new mercury vapor street lights were installed this Centennial year by the C.I.P.S. Co. It is the intention of the City Council to move the old light fixtures to streets just outside the main business area.

Mason City's Sewer Laid In 1919

During 1919 Mason City Drainage District and the City of Mason City built a combination Drainage and Sewer Improvement with an outlet into a ditch draining into Salt Creek. The Drainage District's share of the expense was $30,000 and the City's share was $20,000. The system of tile lines and drainage ditch was built by William Anno, contractor of Havana. Chris Kreiling of Havana was engineer and W. G. Burnsmier was mayor.

The City Hall

The present City Hall building was built in 1929, when James Peters was mayor. Howard Wharram was the contractor and the estimated cost was $11,000. It replaced an old brick building that had been built some fifty years earlier. One of the first buildings to be built in town served as the city building for many years from its location facing north along Elm street near Tonica. Some of the early school classes were held in its rooms before the bigger school buildings were built. The present building, in addition to housing the fire departments also contains the jail, public rest rooms and the Mason City Public Library. The southwest corner of the second floor was reserved for the library at the time of building and the library has been housed there since the completion of the building.

City Limits Extended

During the past few years property owners living just outside the City Limits have indicated a desire to have the City Limits extended to include their property, because of lower water rates, sewer privileges, lower insurance rates, fire and police protection. Following is a list of tracts recently brought into the city: School Area, 10 acres, Nov. 8, 1954; H. G. Ainsworth Subdivision, Sept. 12, 1955; W. T. Ainsworth Addition, April 9, 1956; Charles Flinspach and Others Addition and Mr. and Mrs. Harold Brooks Addition, January 14, 1957.

July 4, 1893

This is a view of East Chestnut Street on July 4, 1893 and as you can see they were having a big celebration at that time. Note the permanent awning built along the front of the buildings. It was a favorite test of strength of small boys to hand over hand up the supporting pipes. The city in those days employed a full-time street sweeper whose chief implements were a shovel and wheelbarrow and not a broom.

1868 Business Directory

J. M. Haughey, editor, Mason City News; Attorneys at law: T. P. Cowan, J. S. Schuck, J. R. Brown; Bankers: Wm. Warnock & Co.; Physicians and Surgeons: J. P. Walker, W. J. Chamblin, Patterson & Conover; J. M. Winn, J. A. Walker, M. C. & M. P. Phinney; Surgeon Dentists: Davis & Jones; Druggists, Stationers, etc.: Hume & Co., Walker & Wilson, Kincaid & Bradley; Collections and Insurance Agent: Israel Hibberd; General Merchants: Orendorff & Keefer, Campbell & Porter, D. Powell, S. M. Swing; Boot, Shoe and Clothing Merchant: Campbell & Porter, Orendorff & Keefer, John Pritchet, Naylor & Co., G. S. Walton; Hardware Merchants: Copeland & Bivens, John Pritchet, Whyler & Eulass; Dealer in Agricultural Implements: John Pritchet; Hotel Proprietors: J. C. Bell—Sherman House, J. H. Wandel—City Hotel; Rear Estate Agents: H. T. Strawn, Daniel Oyler; Proprietors of Steam Grain Elevators: Travis & Brown; Proprietors of City Mills: Hulshizer & Smith; Produce Dealers: Travis & Brown, F. Wendt, Pritchet, Young & Co.; Manufacturer Sash, Doors, Blinds, etc.: J. Dennis Hudson; Furniture Merchant: T. J. Watkins; Undertaker and Cabinet Maker: O. J. Beymer; Watchmaker and Jewelers: B. Masters, Zeigel & Bauman; Artists: Eulass and Sister; Merchant Tailors: H. Porter & Brother, A. Zimmerman; House, Sign and Ornamental Painters and Paper Hangers: C. Turner, A. S. Robinson; Saddle and Harness Makers: Pritchet & Fiddler, Kramer & Co.; Dealers in Lumber: Withers & Vickery, J. Lazoll, Hawthorn & Gates; Livery and Sale Stables: Riner & Bro., Taylor & Hughes; Carpenter and Builders: W. T. Ritter, B. J. Young, George C. Blatchly, Millwright; Wagon and Carriage Manufacturers: Childs, Houseworth & Co., J. McClaren, George Brown; Plow Manufacturers: Childs, Houseworth & Co.; Blacksmiths: Brooker & Cease, Geo. Brown, J. McClaren, Childs, Houseworth & Co.; Brick Manufacturers: R. Seward, Rissinger & Dietrich; Auctioneer and Restaurant: J. C. Ambrose; Osage Orange Nursery: R. Proctor; Plasters: Dement & McElheny.

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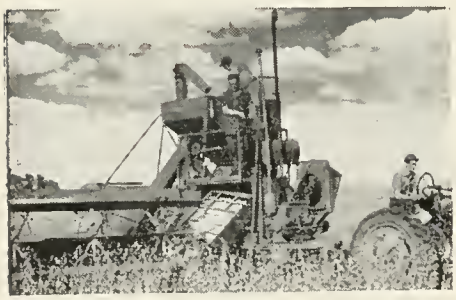

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Community Park District

One of the projects of the Civic Improvement Association which was organized, February 9, 1949, was the promotion of a Summer Recreation Program for school-age youth of the community. After a couple of very successful seasons in which this program was carried out, a group of civic-minded people petitioned the County Judge of Mason County to submit the question of the organization of a Park District to the legal voters of a proposed Park District with Mason City as its center. The County Judge ordered the election on the question and to elect five commissioners in the event the park district proposition was favorably voted at the election.

Mason City Community Park District was organized, October 10, 1951 under the Park District Code of the State of Illinois. The five Commissioners elected were A. H. Blessman, Wilbur Brinner, Frank Conrady, Donald Legg and Dr. V. E. Price.

On August 3, 1953 the City of Mason City turned over the Tourist Park to the Mason City Community Park District to be used as a park. Since that time the commissioners have instituted extensive improvements to this park. The place is now well lighted and has ample picnic facilities which are well used in the spring, summer and fall seasons. Play ground equipment installed at several places in the park also makes the place a popular recreation spot.

Paul Doyle was elected to fill the vacancy of the Board of Commissioners caused when Wilbur Brinner's term of office expired on August 5, 1955. The present board is composed of A. H. Blessman, Frank Conrady, Paul Doyle, Donald Legg and Dr. V. E. Price.

Swimming Pool

A bond issue of $50,000.00 was passed by the voters of the Park District at a special election held August 20, 1955 to decide the question of whether to build a swimming pool and bath house. The contract to build the pool was awarded to A. F. Krall Construction Co. of Decatur. The W. A. Grandy Co. was given the job of constructing the bath house.

The size of the pool is 40 feet by 75 feet and the wading pool is 10 feet by 15 feet. The entire improvement has been equipped with the best of serviceable swimming pool equipment.

The pool was dedicated at the annual May 30, 1957, Memorial Day observance and named "The Memorial Pool" in memory of this community's veterans of all wars.

The City of Mason City turned over the north half of the Monument Park to the Park District on September 12, 1955. The south half of the park where the pool is located is leased on a yearly basis to the Park District.

Recreation Program

The Park District has continued to sponsor the Summer Recreation Program as it was originally instituted. The program consists of instruction in crafts, games, sports, and swimming for all school age youth, under the supervision of qualified instructors.

Public Library Grows from 100 to 8,307 Volumes

The first information concerning a library in Mason City was found in a newspaper item printed in 1879 to the effect that J. F. Culp was elected secretary of the same. A few older citizens have a hazy recollection of a lending library of a sort in the eighties.

To the Woman's Club belongs the honor of having started and by persistent effort established the Mason City Public Library. It became the definite objective for a period of years, of the original twenty members soon after its organization in 1904. The first president, Mrs. J. H. Dearborn and a committee, Mrs. Effie Enlows, Mrs. Fannie Coat, Mrs. Sara Huse were active in directing the attention and interest of the community to the need of library service for cultural and educational purposes.

About this time Dr. Ovens with Clark McKnight had organized and supervised a Boy's Club with headquarters in a reading room on the second floor above the present Kirby's Royal Blue Store, corner of South Main and West Chestnut Streets. Later when the club was disbanded, the furniture, chairs and table and about 88 books were donated to the Woman's Club as the nucleus of a library.

About 1905 a room was secured rent free on the second floor above the store room now occupied by the Karl Leiser Ben Franklin Store, 104 South Main Street, in the building then owned by David Powell. It was open on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons from 1 to 5 p.m. A

Hattie B. Vickery
Mason City's First Librarian

Shown with her invalid father in front of their home on East Elm St., in their car which was one of the few such vehicles in town at that time.

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Mason City, Illinois

box of reference books, the property of A. A. Cargill, was also given by Harry and Dr. C. W. Cargill and with other collected gifts made a total of 150 books to start.

Miss Hattie B. Vickery was employed as the first librarian and worked for a time without pay. She remained in charge under necessarily small wages, until forced to resign by illness followed by her death in 1913. She was succeeded by Mrs. Dora Rickard Walker.

Public plays, box suppers, ball games, lectures and other entertainment were conducted by the Woman's Club to raise money in support of the library. The question of a two-mill city tax was made an issue at a special election in 1906 but was voted down. Later another attempt was made and again defeated, which ended the cherished hope of obtaining a Carnegie library. Success was finally attained and on February 24, 1914 the directors met and organized the first library board, consisting of: President, Mrs. J. H. Dearborn; vice-president, Mrs. Effie Enlows; secretary, Mrs. Clara Warnock; with members, Mrs. Martha E. Cargill, Mrs. Fannie Coat, W. E. Stone and W. G. Burnsmier. Soon afterward, Mrs. Sara B. Huse and Mrs. John Freeman were appointed trustees.

On March 1, the Mason City Free Public Library, consisting of 1,000 books, was turned over to the City and checks issued on the City Treasury to the amount of $500 for the first year. Next year the tax levy was raised to $1,000.

Miss Mamie McLemore was librarian in 1914 and 1915 when, with the aid of Miss Ruby Aubere, Havana librarian, the books were reclassified and a regular library system employed.

In 1916 the board decided that more convenient quarters should be secured and the library was moved to the first floor of the Culp building where the Kozy Hat and Dress Shop is now located, 126 South Main Street. Mrs. Jessie Stewart became librarian at this time and remained until her resignation in 1925. During her years of faithful service, especially in aiding young students with reference work in debates and school activities, many improvements were made. The tax levy was raised to $1,200 and new wooden shelves were added as the books increased. A card catalog and desk were also added. There were a goodly number of standard periodicals on reading tables and a number of these were bound and placed in the reference section. Complete files were kept for years in the small storage room at the rear of the library room and were often a valuable aid for reference to the patrons.

Mrs. Garnet Chesnut was employed as librarian in 1925. She is a charter member of the Woman's Club and served with Mrs. Enlows on the book selection committee in the early days.

Mantie Mathers began her extended and effiicient service as president of the board in 1925.

When the City Hall was built in 1929 the southwest corner of the second floor was reserved for the Public Libary, where it is now located. It is reached by a stairway on the north side of the entrance.

The room is light, attractive and commodious, about 30 by 30 feet with an alcove extension west about 10 feet. Daylight is furnished by seven wide windows and the room is also amply lighted with electricity.

In 1932 the library was rearranged under the capable management of Mrs. Stella Rogier, president. New fireproof steel shelving replaced the former high double-faced wooden stacks which occupied the center floor space and shut out much of the light. Because of the growing book collection double faced steel book racks were bought and placed on the floor in 1935 and 1939. In the book drive for army camps in World War II the librarian and her committee supervised the collection of 568 volumes to the Lincoln Library at Springfield.

Since the retirement of Mrs. Chesnut the library has been served by the following librarians: Mrs. Flossie Close, Mrs. Frances Akin, Mrs. Harriet Middleton and Mrs. Helen Bolinger. Mrs. M. E. Hanover is the present librarian.

The library board is Mrs. J. W. Ainsworth, president; Mrs. Ben Nafziger, secretary-treasurer; Mrs. H. G. Beck, Mrs. Horace Whitney, Mrs. L. E. Mathers Sr., Mrs. V. E. Price, Miss Avis Hubbard, Mrs. Fred Brinner and Mrs. M. E. Hanover.

The library now has 8,307 volumes on its shelves.

Chautauquas

According to the large sign hung from the back of the second car the parade was advertising the Chautauqua. These annual educational and entertainment series of programs were brought here after a guarantee of a certain number of season ticket sales had been made. Held in large tent auditoriums the programs were always of the highest calibre.

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Churches Form Center of Community Life

Sincerity of Purpose and United Effort Surmount Building Difficulties

Baptists Establish First Church In Mason City

The settlements of Mason County were early served by Circuit Rider preachers of the Methodist and Baptist faiths, going from community to community on horseback, and reaching each group about once a month for services. These were not half hour services, but lasted for several hours. The people looked forward to them and thought nothing of sermons lasting a few hours each. The preachers of those days were not seminary graduates, but what they lacked in education, they made up in enthusiasm and sincerity. Those with loud, powerful voices, it is said could be heard a mile away when the atmosphere was right.

The first Baptist Church was organized in 1856 at the Pollock school house, in the neighborhood of Prairie Creek, and was called the Prairie Creek Baptist Church until 1860. By vote of the members on February 25, 1860 the name was changed to First Baptist Church of Mason City, Illinois.

When the church was organized, there were thirteen Charter Members, namely: Lorenzo Hastings, Jane Hastings, J. C. Temple, Lucy Temple, Phoebe Hastings, Sarah Hastings, James L. Hastings, Abram Ingraham and Thomas B. Powell.

Elder Lorenzo R. Hastings, a farmer who had settled on and improved a farm two miles east of Mason City, in 1851, was mainly responsible, through his interest and efforts, for the organization meeting which was held at the Pollock schoolhouse. He was chosen to minister to the group as their first leader.

On May 22, 1859, five trustees were elected to office, then on Feb. 25, 1860, the name was changed to First Baptist Church. In 1862, a schoolhouse was rented for a place to worship, until a building could be erected in Mason City. In 1865, a new pastor was called, Rev. S. S. Martin, and May 19, 1866 a building committee was appointed to plan a church edifice. The church edifice was erected at its present location in 1867, and Rev. Martin planted the elm trees which now landscape the church grounds. Thomas Lamoreaux and Daniel Riner served as the building committee. Years later the church was remodeled and decorated under the pastorate of Rev. F. A. Beyle, in 1901.

During the period from organization to 1870, ten different ministers were called to pastor to the group, the first being Rev. J. M. Hastings, who served one year; the other nine who served for a short time each were: Rev. Scott, Rev. Blunt, Rev. Curry, Rev. Hastings, Rev. Haughey, Rev. Holtslaw and others.

In 1870, the church called the Rev. C. A. Hobbs who was ordained in June 1870, and served as pastor until 1879; Rev. G. C. Peck served from 1879 to 1886; Rev. L.

R. Banks served from 1886 to 1887; Rev. J. S. Hutcherson served as pastor from 1887 to 1889; Rev. W. T. Norris served from 1889 to 1892; Rev. D. McMasters from 1892 to 1894; Rev. A. H. Harnley from 1894 to 1897; Rev. M. M. Smith 1898; Rev. A. H. Rhodes 1899 to 1901; Rev. F. Beyle 1901 and 1902.

For the next forty years, the following pastors served the congregation: Rev. H. H. Breach 1902; Rev. R. B. McCormick 1902-1906; Rev. A. C. Hodgson 1907-1911; Rev. W. F. Thompson 1911-1913; Rev. H. O. Tribble 1914; Rev. J. C. Honigh 1914-1916; Rev. E. A. Powell 1916-1918; Rev. W. W. Ayer 1918-1920; Rev. V. C. Seafler 1920-1924; Rev A. E. Jern 1924-1925; Rev. G. W. Ballenger 1925-1936; Rev. C. A. Wise 1936; Rev. Sneath 1937; Rev. Seide B. Janssen, 1938-1940; Rev. Milo Moore 1941-1942.

Notes from Pioneer Times to 1942

Several pastors of the congregation served in an outstanding capacity in one way or another. Among these were:

Rev. L. R. Hastings, who also served as Sunday School Superintendent and County Sunday School Superintendent for many years. A Dr. May was chorister of the choir, and at that time a small organ was used for music. Mrs. Franklin served as Primary Teacher in the Sunday School.

The Rev. W. W. Ayer came as pastor to the church while a student in college, and served his first pastorate here from November 17, 1918 to October 3, 1920. He did a great work among the young people, and did not forget the older ones. Rev. Ayer was united in marriage to Miss Lucile Woodward, daughter of Mrs. Rhoda Woodward, May 1, 1919. Rev. W. W. Ayer later became the distinguished pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church in the city of New York, where be began his service in 1936. He is currently engaged in traveling as a speaker to con-

ventions throughout the United States and is director of the "Truth Marches On" broadcast on Sunday afternoon from New York. He lives on Long Island, but is still lovingly remembered by the Mason City congregation, whom he has visited several times over the years.

Rev. V. C. Seafler, a Baptist seminary student, came to the Baptist Church as a student supply pastor during the winter of 1920-1921. After his graduation from the seminary in Chicago in June, 1921, he became the full time pastor and served until September, 1924. From Mason City, he went as a missionary to San Salvador, Central America, working among the Spanish speaking people there until 1927. Then he went to southern California, to serve as Colporteur, with Chapel car, working among the Spanish speaking people in the Fresno area, under the supervision of the American Baptist Home Missionary Society. From 1937 to the present, he and Mrs. Seafler have been engaged in missionary work among the Mexican people in the vicinity of Del Ray, California.

Rev. G. Walter Ballenger, and his wife, Rev. Ruie Ballenger served this church from 1925-1936. The Rev. Ballenger made it possible for the fulfillment of a dream of the Baptist congregation — a complete church plant, modernly equipped in every respect. The church building was efficiently remodeled to accomodate the needs of the growing congregation.

The church building was raised about five feet which made room for a convenient basement under the entire building. A new furnace was installed and a new entryway with a bell tower were added. A new baptistry and platform were built, the entire building was replastered and the windows repaired. A new floor, new concrete steps, and new walks were added to put the whole property in excellent condition.

Rev. Seide B. Janssen served the church as pastor from 1938 to 1940 and was graduated from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He also served simultaneously as pastor of the Easton Baptist Church. During his pastorate, he was married to a local girl, Miss Dorothy Duel in 1939. Rev. and Mrs. Janssen have served a number of pastorates in Central Illinois since that time, and at present (1957) they are serving the Baptist Church at Belleville, Illinois.

Other Outstanding Services

Mrs. Ella Heckman, a daughter of J. L. Hastings, charter member, served the early church congregation for many years as organist, having started when her feet could barely reach the pedals.

A Dr. Taylor served for many years as Sunday School Superintendent.

Miss Myra Withers, granddaughter of the former pastor, Rev. S. S. Martin, went to India as a foreign missionary August 25, 1925.

The stepson of the Rev. J. R. Hastings, Rev. George C. Peck, also entered the ministry. He served his first pastorate in Mason City, and while here was united in marriage to Miss Anna Crowl.

A son of Rev. C. A. Hobbs also entered the Baptist ministry.

Miss O. A. Clark served as Sunday School Superintendent for many years and was also active in County Sunday School work. She was the donor of a $500 gift bond to foreign missions of the American Baptist Mission Society.

Miss Lilla Cook was an outstanding church worker, having served for many years as treasurer of the Sunday School until her death. She was the donor of a $500 annuity bond to the Home Missionary Board of the denomination.

Mrs. Etta McKinley was a faithful worker in the local church over a long period of years, serving as Sunday School Superintendent for eight years, and as clerk of the church board for 45 years. The McKinley home was often the center of activities of the church, and when Rev. and Mrs. Ballenger were in town, they made the McKinley home their headquarters. Their home was in Tremont, but they spent part of the week in Mason City. Mrs. McKinley served as secretary of the Mason County Sunday School Association for many years.

Mrs. Ollie Bayne served as Sunday School Superintendent for a period of nine years, as well as serving in other capacities.

Space does not permit enumerating the valuable service rendered by other devoted workers of the congregation, some serving as Sunday School teachers or church officers for long periods of faithful and devoted service.

Rev. H. C. Smith was supply pastor from October 4, 1942 to November, 1945. During his ministry, the church ceiling was redecorated.

The church was spiritually blessed by having Rev. and Mrs. Robert Taylor from December, 1945, to August, 1949.

Rev. Thomas Harfst was pastor from August, 1949, to October, 1951. While he was serving the new parsonage was built by the men of the church who also painted the church building.

After Rev. Harfst resigned Rev. Hall from Springfield was supply pastor.

Rev. Oscar Ouverson began his ministry in January, 1952, and was here until 1955. While he was pastor, the kitchen was modernized and a new gas furnace installed in the basement. A new porch was built on the church parsonage by the pastor. The Constitution was adopted in 1952.

Rev. Lyle Newell came to minister to the church the last of 1955. Since he has been pastor, the church has built a garage, painted the church and parsonage and repaired memorial windows. The church has also been incorporated.

Mrs. Lena Dennison has been church organist from 1942 until the present time.

In 1857 there were thirteen members.

In 1957 there are one hundred and ninety-one members.

The present church officers are:

Moderator: Rev. L. L. Newell; Deacons: Murrell Dennison, James Blevins, Ray Cummins, Ralph Benedict, Richard Starr, Charles Seest. Deaconesses: Mary Robertson, Lila Mae Dennison, Loreen Blevins, Rosena Binger, Ivis Reed, Betty Cummins. Trustees: Kenneth Robertson, Leslie Akin, Omer Emery, Dewey Elmore, Wallace Minner; Treasurer: Mrs. Mary Bates. Clerk: Mrs. Lillian Minner. Sponsor Youth Work: Richard Starr. Sunday School Superintendent: Mrs. Loreen Blevins. Sunday School Secretary and Treasurer: Mrs. Irene Benedict. Missionary Treasurer: Mrs. Flora Hill. Head Usher: James Blevins. Music Director: Rev. L. L. Newell. Social Committee: Mrs. Irene Benedict, Mrs. Jessie Dunham, Mrs. Ann Elmore.

Mrs. Addie Akin served as faithful president of our Missionary Society from 1942 until her health failed in 1953. In 1953 Mrs. Loren Smith became president. In 1954-1955 Mrs. Marie Robertson and in 1956-1957 Mrs. Omer Emery.

Methodists Celebrated Their Centennial In October, 1954

The first meeting of the Methodist Society in this community was held at the Wm. Pollock home, two and one-half miles east of the present town of Mason City. The first preacher was John Mowery, in charge of Walkers Grove Mission, this being one of seven appointments. He made the tour of appointments every three weeks. Preaching, prayer and class meetings were held in the Pollock residence for eighteen months, when a schoolhouse was erected in the northeast corner of the Pollock farm and the meetings were later held there. In Mowery's first year, 1854, a class of ten members was organized and the next year, after a good revival, thirty were added to the membership.

After Rev. Mowery's two years, 1854-1856, Rev. Geo. D. Randle was in charge two years, during which time, in June 1857, he preached the first Methodist sermon in the town of Mason City. The place was a school room, the upper story of the only store in town, owned by Straut and Keefer, on the site of the Mason City National Bank, 129 East Chestnut Street. At that time, the Mission was made a circuit, and later called the Mason City Circuit.

In September, 1858, Rev. Wm. Pollett came and stayed until 1860, then followed the pastorates of A. Sloan 1860-1862; Henry Wallace 1862-1863; and Wm. Paxton 1863-1865. It was during Rev. Paxton's work here that the First M. E. Church was built on lot 7, block 22 of the original town of Mason City, which is now the site of the Gladys Wilkinson home, 117 West Arch Street. Lot 7 was conveyed to the Society by Cortes Hume in 1864 and Lot 6 to the north of it by Wm. Young in the same year. For a few years prior to the building of the Church, the meetings of the Society were held in the small frame school house that stood where the Free Methodist Church was later located.

The original contract for the building of the church bears the date of April 2, 1864 at a cost of $2,350.00. The contract was signed by the following trustees: John Deskins, Quintus Orendorf, Abram Swing, S. D. Swing, Chas. Brooker, Richard Proctor and I. F. Stone. It was also signed by B. A. Rosebrough and Reuben Fuller, builders; and by Israel Hibberd and Rev. Wm. Paxton as witnesses. The work was completed by October 1, 1864.

At the time of the building, the population of Mason City was about five hundred and the erection of such a building was an important event. That was three years before the first railroad was completed through here. The The framing timbers for the church were sawed at the mill at Hiawatha on Salt Creek and it was necessary to haul the other materials by team from Lincoln, Illinois.

At the "Raising" the ladies gave a big dinner on the lots diagonally across from the church site. The dedication is thought to have been in December, 1864. The celebrated Peter Cartwright was engaged for the occasion but unfortunately he was unable to fill the appointment and the services were conducted by the pastor, Rev. Wm. Paxton. According to the record, the duty was well performed but the people had come to hear "Uncle Peter," and were disappointed. Perhaps that was the reason they did not contribute as freely as they otherwise would have done. At any rate, there was a shortage of funds and to meet it the perplexed managers arranged to have Peter Cartwright come and preach a few weeks later and announced that one dollar a head would be charged for admission. This proved to be a mistake for Uncle Peter was displeased with the idea of "being made a show of," and the people at large failed to attend the entertainment, as they called it. At last, a few of the trustees shouldered the burden and the debt to the contractors was paid. After these years of struggle, the Church entered upon a season of prosperity and usefulness.

FINK PHOTO

During the ministry of Edward Rutledge, 1866-1867, a parsonage was built on Lot 6 north of the church. J. N. Simmons was pastor 1867-1868; H. S. Parkhurst 1869-1871. During Parkhurst's administration, meetings were held at Cherry Grove schoolhouse, one of the class leaders being Isaac Surface.

Then P. C. Carroll was pastor from 1871-1872; A. C. Armentrout 1872-1875; J. W. Sinnock, 1875-1878; Wm. Moore 1878-1879; J. Ingram 1879-1882. During Ingram's pastorate, a new organ was purchased for the church and the parsonage repaired. Then H. C. Adams was pastor in 1882-1883, when E. A. Wamsley was sent to the charge and remained until 1884. During E. A.

Wamsley's term, the Ladies' Aid Society was organized with a view to securing a more favorable location on which to build a church. Then there were a number of pastors; F. C. Bruner 1884-1886; H. Barton 1886-1887 and J. Everly 1887-1890. During this period, a lot was purchased on the corner of North Main and East Pine Streets from a Mrs. Richey and another to the north of it from Mrs. Martha Conroy. Among the records is a receipt for six dollars which the trustees paid to Mrs. Conroy for her garden. The old parsonage and lot were traded for this second lot.

On these lots, the main part of the building we now have, the auditorium, the south and west rooms were erected. The corner stone was laid November 19, 1888. The following articles were placed in the corner stone: a Bible, a Hymn book, Church Discipline of 1888, the minutes of the Annual Conference of 1888, pieces of copper and silver coin, names of subscribers to the building fund and the amounts subscribed, names of present members and names of officers and teachers of the Sunday School.

An article from the Mason City Independent of August 16, 1889 stated as follows: "Last Sunday, August 11th was the day appointed for the dedication of the new M. E. Church located at the corner of North Main and East Pine Streets. It is a handsome brick building, capable of seating about five hundred people, and its plan and architectural beauty reflects great credit upon the architect, Mr. Corwine of Lincoln. The total cost of the building was $10,000 and about half of that amount had to be raised on the day of dedication. The task seemed herculean and many regarded it as impossible, but Dr. W. H. Adams who preached the morning sermon, buckled into it and so successful was his assault upon the hearts and pockets of the people, that by the close of the noon service, the mountain was reduced to a molehill and under his final assault at the night service, the mole hill was entirely removed, after which the church was formally dedicated. The obtaining of the subscriptions, the amount of $5,000 in a single day's service was most remarkable and without a parallel in the city. Dedication Day was a beautiful day, no services were held in the other churches and the house was crowded.

At 9:00 A.M. the Sunday School met at the old church and the several classes with their teachers marched in a procession to the new church. This school is about the oldest organizatin of its kind in the city. In this procession were a number of faithful workers who had labored in various capacities in that school through adversity as well as prosperity for nearly a quarter of a century. Many tender memories and many conflicting emotions rushed through their souls as they looked back upon the deserted scene of their long and perhaps unappreciated labors and sacrifices.

At the new building, the school sang a few songs and several visiting ministers made brief addresses. The ministers participating were George Stevens, presiding elder; John Everly, pastor; W. H. Musgrove, Jacksonville and Dr. W. H. Adams. All the sermons delivered that day were able and abounded with wholesome lessons. Time and again the people were told that a building, however beautiful, does not constitute a church, that in a higher sense, a church is a body of devout Christian believers; persons who have faith in Christ and not in a fine meeting place; persons who have the spirit of Christ and try to follow his example of love, kindness and gentleness toward each other and the world at large; persons who are not given to backbiting, bickerings, jealousy, evil speaking, false accusations, personal revenge, harsh judgement or any other practice born of a wicked heart; people who can tolerate honest differences of opinion and who adjust all their troubles according to the Spirit and plan of the Gospel of Christ." Although written in 1889, these words many well be considered by the Methodist people today. The old Church was destroyed by fire the next year, in July 1890 and thus was removed an historical landmark.

While Henry Wilson was pastor from 1891-1894, the main part of the present parsonage was built on a lot purchased from G. C. Ely. Rev. Wilson and family lived in the Kinsey Virgin house in the north part of town, which location is now Velde apartments, 124 East Roosevelt Road. The cost of the parsonage was $2,646.00 Shortly after 1900, some additions were made to the parsonage, 311 North Tonica, supposedly the kitchen, pantry and rooms above, but the record is not quite clear on that point.

The Methodists continued to worship in the building as dedicated until 1912, with the following pastors; J. R. Van Pelt, J. A. Burchitt, G. W. Flagge, E. A. Hamilton, T. A. Parker, F. B. Madden, A. W Mills and T. H. Tull. It was during the ministry of T. H. Tull that the church was enlarged owing to the increased membership. The present East Room was added, also several class rooms. A basement was placed under the entire building and some changes were made in the auditorium and all was redecorated. The present organ was installed at that time, part of the funds for the same being contributed by the Cleveland-Riggs family. When the church was first built, the reed organ from the old church was used, and later a small pipe organ was pumped by hand.

Then came the following pastors: J. E. Artz, W. M. Wells, R. W. Ennis, Grant Johnson, J. F. Wohlfarth and E. H. Sauer, during whose pastorate the church was again redecorated. The Happy Hour Class was organized during Rev. Sauer's ministry and it is still going strong. The following ministers: V. H. Van Horn, L. P. Bear, O. E. Martin, C. S. Boyd, E. O. England and the church was again redecorated. Rev. H. G. Beck was minister from 1942-1949, serving the church for a longer period than any other minister. He retired in 1949 on account of ill health. He and Mrs. Beck continued to live in Mason City and he was always willing to help in every way possible until his death in May, 1954. It was during his ministry that the Altar Set was presented to the Church by Mrs. Covey in memory of Emerson Beck who lost his life in the Second World War.

Rev. S. P. Wiese served from 1949 to 1954 when he was assigned to Carlinville. During his ministry, Mrs. O. N. Swaar presented the church with a public address system in memory of her husband, Mr. O. N. Swaar. In 1954, Rev. Lloyde G. Strouse came to minister to the church from Paxton, Illinois. He came in June and we held our Centennial in October, 1954.

Although it was a difficult task for one new on the charge, he carried on in a very commendable and successful manner. In the pageant that was given at the Centennial, Rev. Strouse played the part of Rev. Paxton who was minister when the first church was dedicated in

1864. Rev. and Mrs. Strouse, in the three years of their work here have shown themselves to be able and efficient leaders. Their work with the adult and youth choirs deserves special mention. The Methodist Men's Club was started under Rev. Strouse's guidance. It was during his ministry that the Baptismal Font was presented to the church by Mrs. Covey and her family. Also, Mrs. Beck presented a picture of Christ by Sallman in memory of Rev. H. G. Beck. Then two brass vases to match the altar set were presented to the church at Easter time by Mrs. England in memory of Rev. E. O. England.

Recently it has been necessary to use some of the available space for additional class rooms to take care of the growing Sunday School.

Some mention should be made of our organist, Mrs. Ida Swing, who served in that capacity for years and years after the present church was dedicated. For the past twenty-six years, we have had a very faithful and efficient organist in the person of Mrs. Vera Fink. She not only looked after the music herself but has trained two of our young people, Miss Susan Lynn and Miss Jolly Jennings who are very capable assistants.

All the pastors and faithful workers in our church cannot be mentioned individually, but each one contributed his part in the making of the Methodist Church as it is today. May it move on to larger accomplishments.

When Conference met in June, 1957, a new Pastor was sent to Mason City, Rev. F. C. Stelzriede. He is already settled in the parsonage and is getting acquainted with the membership. We are looking forward to a happy and successful year in our Church Fellowship.

First Presbyterian Building Stopped By Civil War

In 1856, the pastor of the newly organized Presbyterian Church at Delavan, Rev. Templeton, being missionary minded, established "preaching points," around the country, one of these being at Cherry Grove. From this small seed grew the Mason City Presbyterian Church.

The next year, 1857, the town of Mason City was laid out, and a petition was made to the Peoria Presbytery for a church at Mason City. A committee was appointed and on March 1, 1858, the church was organized with Thomas Blain, Silas Hotchkiss and Gideon Osborne, elders; and Dr. J. M. Sudduth and John Van Horn as deacons.

We are unable to give an exact list of the charter members, as some of the records, have been lost. But from available data and the memory of the oldest members, is is certain that the original thirteen are included in the following list. Those on the list, not charter members were soon enrolled as regular members: John Van Horn, Mrs. Jane Mathers Van Horn; John McKnight, Mrs. Martha A. McKnight; William Woodward, Mrs. Roxanna Woodward; Levi Goodale, Mrs. Martha Goodale; J. Hunt, Mrs. Cornelia Hunt; Gideon Osborne, Mrs. Cynthia Osborne; Silas Hotchkiss, Mrs. Hotchkiss; Dr. J. M. Sudduth, Mrs. Amanda Sudduth; Thomas Blaine; Samuel Pierson Woodward, Mrs. Helen Biggs Woodward; Miss Elizabeth Woodward; Mrs. Elizabeth Cavin Mathers; Mrs. Emily Tomlin. Nine of the charter members were relatives of Mrs. W. F. Zimmerman.

The meeting place of these early religious pioneers was in an upper room of what was then the Woodward and Cargill Store, on Tonica Street between Arch and Elm Streets. The school house on the site of the home of Mr. and Mrs. Claude J. Martin, 119 North Menard Street, was next used and later, they met in a room in the house of Mrs. Laura Richey, daughter of the Rev. John Andrews, who was their first pastor. This house was the site of the present Methodist Church, corner of North Main and East Pine Streets.

The story of the first Presbyterian Church building in Mason City from its planning in 1859 to its completion in 1865 forms a saga of pioneer religious zeal. Brick were hauled by wagon from Pekin, there being no railroad here at that time; timber for the frame was cut by members; and on the appointed day, the families gathered from miles around. The men furnished the labor to raise the church in a single day and the women did their share by contributing a huge basket dinner. And what a day of rejoicing it was to see their new church home taking on reality!

Enough of the building was finished so that it could be used for the services during the trying war years. Five hundred dollars toward this project was donated by the National Home Missionary Board of the Presbyterian Church. The same sweet-toned bell which you hear today was a gift to the church, secured through the influence of Mr. Wm. Woodward from friends of his in New England. It is made of genuine bell metal containing a percentage of silver. This first building is the present St. Columba's Catholic Church and it stands sturdily on the original site, a monument to the faith and devotion of its early builders.

In 1872, the present building was erected at a cost of $12,000.00, the site having been purchased earlier for

$1,700.00. This was an ambitious undertaking for so small a group, and considering the high interest rate at the time, it involved years of struggle, which could not have reached success without the cooperation of the whole community.

The Fall Church Festival in those early days, became a yearly institution to be prepared for and looked foreward to for months. It lasted three days and included every money making device; a bazaar with all kinds of booths, from fortune telling, to grab bags, fishing pools, and candy and bakery counters. There were also entertainment features and pageants, a public supper each night and a big dinner served for the farmers on Saturday noon, which they anticipated and enjoyed keenly. But the biggest thrill of all was when the women at the end of all their hard work were able to turn over $400.00 or more for the church fund.

In later years, the Ladies Improvement Society was organized and did much to beautify the church, putting in the stained glass windows and laying the first good carpet the church ever had.

A short history must leave out much detail, and cannot mention by name the countless faithful officers and workers who have, through long years given their utmost in devotion. Only a few interesting facts may be noted, centering around each pastor's term of service.

Rev. John Andrews, the first pastor served from 1858-1867. The membership of the struggling little band reached forty-seven.

Rev. Stephen J. Bogle served from 1867-1882. He was the first pastor to conduct services in the new church. He had the longest service record of any local pastor up to that time. The church was then transferred from Peoria to Springfield Presbytery. Two hundred fifty-three additions were made to the membership during his pastorate.

Rev. E. S. Fitz then came as stated supply, June 1882 and served ten months.

Then Rev. D. K. Campbell served from 1883-1886. It was at this time that the first pipe organ was dedicated. Before this, a little Mason and Hamlin organ had been used and it and the choir sat in the gallery at the back.

Mrs. W. F. Thompson and later, her daughter Jennie presided over the music. Mary Walker Whitworth was the first to play the pipe organ. In 1884, Mrs. Alma Thompson took her place as organist, which office she efficiently and generously filled for fifty-four years. In later years, the contribution of Miss Inez Freeman to the musical life of the church has also been outstanding.

Rev. A. G. Lane served as pastor from 1887-1891. At this time the Christian Endeavor Society was organized and became very active. They presented the church with two memorial windows and they are credited by some with the gift of the pulpit furniture. It, however seems more probable that the Ladies Improvement Society was responsible for this gift, with Mr. Allen Bradley making up the deficit. Another window, one in the balcony, was given in memory of Agnes Cottrell.

Rev. Robert Watt was minister, 1892-1893.

Rev. C. A. Taylor from 1893-1896. During his service the Christian Endeavor paid for the building of the first cement walks of the church.

Rev. G. T. Crumrine served from 1896 until his death in 1899. He is the only pastor to die here and to be buried in the Mason City Cemetery.

Rev. A. S. Kaye served from 1899 to 1905. Rev. Mr. Kaye made the lattice work at the back of the church with the assistance of Mr. Ralph Ainsworth.

Rev. E. M. Dill served from 1906-1908. At this time, a gift of $1,000.00 was given by J. H. Mathers and was used to rebuild the organ.

Rev. E. R. North was minister from 1903-1910. At this time, Jessie Porter of Rockford, in memory of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Royal Porter, presented the church with an individual communion set which is still in use. During Rev. North's pastorate, a basement was put under the entire church.

From 1910-1914 Rev. E. L. Lord was minister and it was during his pastorate that a pulpit Bible was presented by Mrs. Emma Whitney.

Rev. C. W. Clough served seven months in 1915-1916 and resigned because of ill health.

Rev. Walter Turney was here from 1917-1925 and during his stay, a flag was presented to the church by Mrs. John Freeman.

On April 18, 1918, the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the church was celebrated. There was a Missionary Pageant and Rev. D. K. Campbell was back to give the address.

Rev. F. P. Miller served from 1926-1930. And in 1927, the fine John Freeman Memorial Austin Organ was presented to the church by his wife. This outstanding organ is ever an addition to the worship service, and cannot be considered without gratitude to the donor.

Rev. John Paul Vincent served from 1930-1936. Little White Church, Pioneer and Tuxis Societies were organized for the young people. The office of Financial Director was created and Church Bulletins put in use. Elder W. I. Kincaid died in 1931, after serving on the session for 63 years (58 years actively) and acting as its clerk for over 50 years. He had missed only two communion services in 58 years. He had attended meetings of Presbytery, Synod and the General Assembly numerous times.

On February 26, 1933 was celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the church. There was a potluck supper and singing of old songs, with the choir dressed in old fashioned costumes, and Mrs. Alma Thompson presiding at the little old Mason and Hamlin organ.

Rev. George G. Cox served as stated supply from June to September 1936.

Rev. Paul R. Spierling served from 1936-1939. During his pastorate, using a gift of $1,000.00 from the Jeff Donavan Estate, and a $500.00 gift from W. T. Ainsworth a new carpet was laid in the church.

Rev. E. Russell Lynn served from 1940-1942 and in February of 1942 was called to a larger pastorate at Belleville, Illinois. During his ministry, new hymnals were purchased and the Mr. and Mrs. Club was organized of couples whose combined ages did not total over seventy-five years.

Robert Thomas was minister 1942-1943 and he entered the armed services as chaplain.

Lewis N. Raymond was minister 1943-1946, leaving here to become pastor of State Street Church in Jacksonville.

Joe L. Jensen ministered to the church 1946-1950. During his service the sanctuary was redecorated and the chancel rearranged.

Thomas A. Madison was here 1950-1953. He left here for advanced study at the University of Illinois.

Rev. W. H. Merriam served from 1954-1957 at which time he resigned to take up Christian Education work on the National Staff.

Special tribute and appreciation should be given to Miss Inez A. Freeman for her years of devotion to the music of the church. As a young girl, she played the piano for Sunday School, later served as choir director and then as organist since 1938. For many years, she and Mrs. Thompson played organ and piano preludes each Sunday. Mr. L. E. Herman as choir director for many years has contributed greatly to the ministry of music in the church.

This brings us down to the present. Those who are in the church now, and the younger ones coming on, will write a future history as full of activity and promise as the past has been.

Christians Build First Church After 20 Years

The history of the Christian Church began with a series of services conducted by Elder William Grissom about the middle of February, 1863. These meetings were held in a frame school house located at what is now 119 North Menard Street. (This building was later occupied by the Free Methodist Church and is now the location of the Claude Martin Home.) The first to be enrolled was Mrs. Phoebe Haughey. She was afterwards joined by her husband, Elder J. M. Haughey who became the first of more than thirty pastors who have served the congregation. The first persons to unite with the congregation by confession and baptism were Mrs. M. C. Ewers and Mrs. Clara Radebaugh. The first Elders were Elihu Wooley, T. A. Shaw and J. M. Haughey. The first deacons were Robert Shaw, R. Scoby and Aquilla Ellsworth.

For more than twenty years the congregation had no church home, but met regularly in school houses, halls and private residences. During this period, various ministers and circuit riders occupied the pulpit. Among them were J. O. Kane, C. D. Fuller, L. Carpenter, D. E. Miller, D. T. Hughes, W. H. Kern, a man named Vawter and perhaps others.

In 1884, during the pastorate of W. H. Kern, an evangelist, G. M. Goode, held a series of revival meetings in the opera house (the present site of the Legion Hall). During the progress of these meetings, a reorganization of the body was effected to admit into fellowship a number who composed the Allens Grove congregation. This group had been organized April 13, 1872 and had been meeting in the Allens Grove school house. Among those who came to Mason City were Joseph Kehl and the families of T. D. Taylor, James Legg, William Miller and others.

With this added strength came talk of the erection of a house of worship. On March 19, 1885, pastor W. H. Kern called a special business meeting at the home of Mrs. C. E. Craig. After preliminary discussion, the following building committee was appointed: James Legg, D. S. Day, H. M. Anderson, G. N. Kern and W. Swiger.

Following a strenuous campaign of soliciting funds, self-denial and zealous labor on the part of the committee members and congregation, the present site at the corner of East High and Tonica Streets was secured and construction work begun. During this time, Pastor Kern was succeeded by a man named Vawter and the work was pushed to completion.

The new building, a frame structure, was dedicated January 3, 1886 by Elder T. T. Holton of Lincoln, Ill. Following the dedication, Elder Holton held a meeting of several weeks, during which Brothers Vawter and Holton made a canvass of the community, climbing over snowdrifts and enduring other trying experiences in their work of visitation. Other workers of this period were Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Anderson and daughter, Nellie; William Cole, Mrs. C. E. Craig and her girls; Mr. and Mrs. G. N. Kern, Mr. and Mrs. James Legg, Mrs. Childs, the Reasons, Radebaughs, Cadwalladers, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Haughey, Mrs. Wilson, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Miller and Joseph Kehl.

In July, 186 Elder Holton was called to minister to the body every two weeks, coming from his home in Lincoln to perform this service. He continued for eighteen months and was followed in turn by Elders, J. E. Diehl, T. C. Littleton, Paul McReynolds, C. F. Stead, A. C. Roach, B. A. Armstrong, H. A. Orchard, O. C. Bolman, J W. Porter, F. E. Welton and C. H. Hands.

The effort to erect the present beautiful edifice had its origin in a question put to members of the church board at their meeting August, 1912, by Elder C. H. Hands who was then acting president, vis: "What is the meaning of this talk about a new church edifice. If merely talk, would it not be best to suppress it lest it should become an injury to the growth and efficiency of the church?" — The unanimous reply was, "If plans of an acceptable nature can be secured we are ready to go forward with the enterprise." The following Lord's Day, a call was made for subscriptions. The response indicated a desire to go forward at least in raising the money. Later results indicated a compelling desire for action and at a special meeting of the board, the following building committee was appointed and the same evening approved by the congregation: C. H. Hands, chairman; P. A. Enlows, Joseph Kehl, T. D. Taylor, A. D. Willock, Habert LeSourd, treasurer and C. W. Warnock, secretary. Building plans were secured from George W. Cramer of New York City and the building contract was awarded

to Grant Meneley of Champaign, Illinois, who was one of the foremost church builders of his day.

The first move was to secure lots adjoining the church grounds on the north, then followed rapidly the clearing of the ground for the new edifice. A ground-breaking ceremony was held Saturday afternoon, September 28, 1912 at which time Mrs. Nancy Miller turned the first spade followed by Allen Brooner, Mrs. J. M. Haughey and all forty members of the church. The work of excavating was begun Tuesday, October 2, 1912 and one month from that date, part of the foundation had been laid. In the advent of cold weather, work was discontinued until Spring. Meanwhile plans for raising money matured. A brick selling campaign was initiated; the ladies became caterers at several public sales; the Bible School entered the race to raise a mile of pennies and nickels. The latter plan was later used by teachers to purchase chairs for the class rooms.

The corner stone was laid with appropriate services, and amid a spirit of great rejoicing, by the members of C.W.B.M. Auxiliary in the afternoon of August 6, 1913. The principal address was delivered by Elder A. I. Zeller of Petersburg, Illinois. Local pastors and several laymen assisted. The box contains the following: History of the building enterprise by C. H. Hands, copies of the Christian Evangelist, Christian Standard, special edition of the local newspaper, together with other valuable documents.

The building was completed in the Spring of 1914 at a cost of $20,000 and dedication services were held Sunday, March 1, with Brother Snively of Lewistown, Illinois bringing the messages at the three services of the day. $11,500 was raised in cash and subscriptions and the building was dedicated free of debt. Subscription accounts for the day were kept by J. S. Culp, F. W. Buehrig and O. F. Weber.

On the dedication day all religious groups of the city united, meeting first at the Free Methodist building, which had been used during the period of construction of the new edifice. From there they marched in a body to the new building. Supt. G. W. White turned over the Bible School hour to Brother Snively who gave an interesting and instructive talk to the children. For the worship service, more than every available seat was needed and an overflow meeting was arranged at the First Methodist Church. Children under sixteen were asked to give up their places to the older people.

In this construction, the old building was moved a little to the west, turned half way around, and after having been brick veneered, became the educational unit of the present structure. This was considered, at the time, the prettiest and most complete church building in the county. Brother C. H. Hands, writing concerning this accomplishment said, "The building is complete. May it be a "Church Home," where God's family may gather in exultant praise and thanksgiving. A home where a stranger may find a hearty welcome, and the prodigal a refuge from the fierce storm of distrust and misspent ambition. Out of Zion may streams issue for the healing power and saving virtue to generations yet unborn."

Members of the church board at the time of dedication were: Elders, C. H. Hands, Wilson Griffeth, P. A. Enlows; Deacons, Joseph Kehl, T. D. Taylor, Harry Conroy, J. W. Singleton, C. W. Warnock, O. D. Sutley, J. C. Snyder, and A. D. Willock; trustees, Joseph Kehl, T. D. Taylor, P. A. Enlows, G. D. Childs and C. W. Warnock. Bible School officers were, Supt. G. W. White, assistant P. A. Enlows, secretary Miss Frances Yardley, treasurer Mrs. Emma Walker and organist Miss Lela Yardley. Officers of the C.W.B.M. were, president Mrs. N. E. McCluggage, vice-president Mrs. C. H. Hands, secretary Mrs. J. B. Hanson and treasurer Mrs. H. A. Hull. Christian Endeavor officers were president Miss Alice McCluggage, vice-president Miss Lela Yardley, secretary Miss Emma Hands and treasurer Miss Frances Yardley.

Following the occupation of the new building, the congregation took on new life and with increased zeal set out to win others to Jesus Christ and enlist them in building a New Testament Church in Mason City. During the years a number of evangelistic meetings have been held. One of the first and most successful was by Brothers Campbell and Lint in January, 1921, near the close of the pastorate of W. H. Hampton. During this meeting there were more than 100 additions to the membership including a number from the inactive Mt. Pleasant congregation that had been worshipping in a building located four miles south of town. This congregation was organized in Haw Grove school house on August 18, 1877 by Elder J. I. Judy. Later a church building was erected and they were served by a number of ministers, many of whom also served Mason City. Among them were Elders McElfresh, Fuller, Haughey, Grissom, Garlin, Beckman, Pruett, Boles, Diehl, Piatt, Hughes, Orchard, Bolman, Porter and Barnett. Brother George Hughes was employed for a year beginning January 6, 1889 for the sum of $125.00. The building committee for the Mt. Pleasant buiding were Joseph and Hiram Creekpaum and Allen Brooner, the latter the father of Mr. Guy Brooner of our congregation. Brother Charles Hull, one of the present elders was elected deacon at Mt. Pleasant, August 28, 1898. He later served as elder there.

In January, 1921, during the ministry of W. H. Hampton, Brother C. S. Jupin and family came into the fellowship from the Methodist Church. Later, the same year, during the ministry of O. P. Ballinger, one of the sons, Charles Jupin, was ordained to the Christian Ministry, and is now working in the field of general evangelism.

In 1921 the present parsonage was erected at a cost of $7,000.00. Some timbers from the Mt. Pleasant church building were used in the construction, also some of the pews from Mt. Pleasant were used for a time and the present pulpit is from that building. Officers of the board at the time the parsonage were erected were chairman T. D. Taylor and secretary Delta C. Lowe. Others active in the enterprise were Joseph Kehl and Habert LeSourd, who served as treasurer.

An item from the board minutes of March 5, 1922 reads as follows: "That the parsonage be not desecrated by renting to anyone in case it should be empty and the church without a pastor."

It was during the ministry of E. K. Beckett that the congregation purchased an organ from a theatre in Havana, Illinois. It was dedicated October 4, 1942. In October, 1945, Evangelist H. K. Schoonmaker held a meeting which resulted in forty additions to the membership. During the ministry of Paul Boyer, Raymond Huffman decided to enter the Christian Ministry and was ordained Easter Sunday, April 1, 1945. He is now serving the Bell Ridge Church near Paris, Illinois.

More recently families from the closed Malone Christian Church near Green Valley have united with the congregation. The history of this group as related by Mrs. Fanny Thompson is as follows — "The building known as the Malone Christian Church was built one mile south of Green Valley in the year 1879 at a cost of $1,000.00. In October, 1895, it was moved four miles southwest where it was remodeled and made fit for worship by the men of the community. It was dedicated on January 19, 1896. On this date a Bible School was organized with Miss Ida Campbell of Mason City as Superintendent. There were 68 persons present and on June 21 of the same year, 127. At one time, there was a church membership of 93. More than forty ministers and evangelists preached for the congregation. In October, 1947, the membership had become depleted by deaths and removals and the building was in need of such extensive repairs that it was decided to close activity there. Some members went to Delavan, others to Mason City" Those uniting with the congregation here were the Boyer, Thompson and Forbes families.

Within the past six years, during the ministry of O. E. Bennett, many improvements have been added to the church building and parsonage, including new light fixtures in the church basement, new fixtures in the rest rooms, redecoration of buildings inside and painting outside. Installation of gas water heater for church kitchen and baptistry use, an electric refrigerator, new steps at the south of the building, and in 1952, two hundred Hymn books were put in use and in 1953 a full set of chrome Communion Trays and Plates were dedicated August 20. In the year 1956 a new oil-burning furnace was installed in the church, and a Hammond Electric Organ and Public Address System put in use. At the parsonage an electric water heater, oil burner in the furnace, steel kitchen cabinets, new steps, front and rear, including new rear porch and a new roof on the parsonage in August 1951.

Within this period there have been 218 additions to the membership, which including resident and non-resident now stands at 464. Average attendance had grown from 100 to 200 in worship services and the Bible School from 125 to 250. The oldest person in point of membership is Mrs. Nora Chambers, who united with the congregation in May 1889. Four persons, Richard Clifford, Mr. and Mrs. Dale DeLong and Carol Lowe have dedicated themselves to full time Christian service. DeLong graduated from Eureka College this year and is preaching for the ElVista Christian Church in Peoria. Richard Clifford is a student at Eureka and is doing supply work. Carol Lowe was a student at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Illinois.

September 30 to October 4, 1953 the congregation celebrated the 90th anniversary of its organization with appropriate ceremonies. The Church moves forward to greater victories for Christ, and anticipates a Centennial Celebration in 1963.

The Free Methodist Church

The Free Methodist Church in Central Illinois was organized in 1879 with services in Mason City being conducted by a "Class Leader" or "Local Preacher" until 1884 when Miss Nora Neal, an evangelist, took Mason City as her first pastorate. Later in that year, W. R. Bonham came as pastor and in 1885, the members were listed as Charter Members. The congregation was always a small group with never more than 30 members but the church had its own pastor until 1912.

When Wiley Johnson was pastor, 1899-1901, an undenominational Sunday School was held in the Pleasant View School, now Bell View Center. Some of that community may remember the small black cloth-covered song book used. It contained no music but was "Gospel Hymns, Consolidated," which means all hymns in Gospel Hymns in Books 1, 2, 3 and 4, Copyright 1884, an excellent little book. The Annual Conference of the District was usually a Camp Meeting and Revival Service and was often held in "Old Park," Mason City, now the Tourist Park or Picnic Park.

In 1886 M. H. Shepherd was pastor; 1887 J. L. McGriffin; 1890 L. C. Cockrain; 1891 A. J. Smith; 1892-1893 H. F. Ashcraft; 1894 B. F. Grigg; 1895-1896 B. F. Ray; 1897 J. L. Williford; 1898-1900 Wiley Johnson; 1901-1902 W. Irving; 1903-1904 Thomas Symans; 1905 W. A. Phillips; 1906-1907 W. T. Graham; 1908-1909 C. P. Ewing and Lulu Ewing; 1910-1911 M. C. Saunders. Rev. Saunders was the last resident minister and meetings were then held occasionally with Leslie Vail of Clinton, as supply minister until 1916. There were also other various supply minister until 1916.

After standing idle for some time, the property was sold to Edw. Jones and the location is now the C. J. Martin home, 119 North Menard Street. The parsonage at that time was sold to Miss Pansy Legg. The "Greenville College" of Greenville, Illinois, A Free Methodist school, and rated as one of the good small colleges of the state, was given part of the proceeds from the sale.

St. Columba's Catholic Church Showing Steady Growth

— Fink Photo

Early Catholic pioneers living in scattered farm homes in this area had no regular place of worship prior

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to 1870. According to available records Rev. John W. Kennedy, the first resident pastor of Pekin, attended Delavan, an out-mission at that time.

His successor, Father Thomas Cashman, made monthly trips to Manito, Havana, Mason City and Tremont, until he was transferred to Chicago in 1872. Delavan remained an outmission of Pekin until 1877.

Some of the older parishioners remember that the earliest Catholic services were held in the homes of various members in the settlement. For a time they met with Mrs. Johnny Burns, in the brick house which formerly stood on the Chamblin lots, south of the railroad park.

The present church building, as now located, was begun by the Presbyterian congregation in 1860 but was not finished until after the war in 1865. That it still stands in use 97 years later attests to the quality of the timber which was hauled many miles from Pekin, Leases and Walkers Groves and other nearby forests.

In 1872, the church building and lot was purchased from the Presbyterians and remodeled to suit the needs of the parish. For a few years the priest lived in Mason City but later the Mission Church was linked with Delavan. In those days, the Delavan pastors drove on alternating Sundays to Mason City with a team of horses hitched to a buggy until the railroad schedule permitted a round trip journey between the towns. There was a large congregation made up of settlers on farms in the surrounding country including Easton, New Holland and San Jose.

Many Irish families on Scully prairie land drove fifteen miles and more by wagon, spring wagon, and buckboard to attend Mass on Sunday. Well-known families such at the Hoods, Devens, Sheahans, Evans, O'Malleys and Rawleys moved West in the quest for land. Family names of other members were Christy's, Doyles, Gleasons, Hickeys, Hubbards, Ruans, McKennas and Straubs are among present descendants.

Church suppers and yearly festivals to secure financial aid were held in the LaForge Opera House (now the Legion Hall) grab bags, candy, food and fancy work booths and dancing were some of the attractions. Besides a popularity contest for young ladies there was one also for the gentlemen with a gold-headed cane as a prize for the best vote-getter.

Redecorations and alterations in the interior of the church have been made from time to time, with improvements of an organ, new pews, furnace, electric lights and other furnishings added.

In 1909, St. Columba's was connected with St. Patrick's church in Lincoln during the pastorate of the Rev. James T. Mulgrew. After his death in 1935, the Rev. W. P. White, head of the Lincoln deanery, was installed as irremovable rector.

Other priests from St. Patrick's Lincoln, who served St. Columba's were the Rev. R. O. Barnett and the Rev. Joseph O'dea.

St. Columba's became an out-mission of St. Mary's Lincoln, on June 15, 1950. Since that date, services have been held regularly on every Sunday and holyday of obligation by the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Leo P. Henkel, pastor of St. Mary's congregation, Lincoln or his assistants, first the Rev. Maurus C. Bernabei, and thereafter until now by the Rev. Louis M. Condon.

A new ceiling has been installed in the church, the interior redecorated and rewired with fluorescent lighting, a new roof put on, and the exterior repainted. Other recent improvements include a rich new sanctuary carpet, sedilaia, statue of St. Joseph with Christchild, and electrification of the organ. An outstanding event in June of last year was the First Solemn Mass of a parishioner, the Rev. Donald Schladen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Schladen.

An active Altar and Rosary Society of some fifty women must be credited with much of the good accomplished during the past years. The present officers of the society are: president, Mrs. Eugene Lagier; vice-president, Mrs. James Hanover; secretary, Mrs. Eugene Giehl. Hugh McKenna and Ray Schladen together with the pastor constitute the executive committee of the board of trustees of the congregation. Miss Avis Hubbard has served as organist for the past forty-seven years. Mrs. Clyde Dale Myers is director of the choir and religious education.

St. Columba's has been enjoying a steady growth and is desirous of contributing generously to the welfare of the community of which it has had the honor of being a part for so many years.

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Missouri Synod

As eary as 1889, Lutherans living in Allens Grove Township were conscious that religion was an important part of their community life and requested preaching services in their midst. Pastor Rutland, who was serving the St. Paul's Manito congregation, preached the first sermon in this area in the Allens Grove school house. This place served as the place of worship until the year 1907. Pastors of Manito, Mason City and Lincoln served during this initial period.

In 1907, the Rev. Theo Sieving, then serving the Manito congregation and also preaching in the Allens Grove area urged that a house of worship be erected. Mr. Henry Diers donated a plot for the church grounds, one-fourth of a mile north of the schoolhouse that was being used for worship services. In a short time, a church that seated approximately 100 worshipers was built on this woody knoll. Much of the labor was donated by members of the congregation. The cornerstone of the new building was laid on August 25, 1907 and on November 24, 1907 a new house of worship was dedicated to the glory of God. Its cost plus furnishings was $2,600.00 which was paid on completion of the building program.

The building committee was composed of Henry Harnache and John Wacker, both deceased and J. H. Renken of Mason City.

The congregation was officially organized on May 10, 1908 with fifteen voting members, forty-four communicant members and ninety-five souls. Pastor Sieving of St. Paul's Manito, continued to serve until it was decided to call a full time pastor. During this time, services, three per month, were held on Sunday afternoons. For a number of years, the services were conducted in German but as the congregation grew, the German language gave place to English. All services have been conducted in English since about 1917.

The Martha-Mary Ladies Aid was organized in September, 1908. A Young People's Society was organized in July, 1917. This organization is now the Walther League of St. Luke's Church.

In August, 1931, the Rev. Harry A. Timm, the first resident pastor, was called. At this time, the congregation numbered twenty-eight voting members, sixty-four communicant members and one hundred sixteen souls.

The congregation steadily grew and in 1938 the church building was enlarged. It was lengthened by twenty-four feet and a full basement was put under the building. This enlarged structure provided seating for 150 worshipers.

Some of the improvements made at this time were: Art glass windows, interior redecorated with a new ceiling of temlock, new light fixtures, altar, pulpit, forced air furnace and kitchen. The surrounding grounds were landscaped. Rededication services were held on September 4, 1938 and were conducted by the following pastors: The Rev. E. F. Tonn, then of Arzenville, the Rev. W. E. Hohenstein, then of Bloomington and the Rev. A. F. Wiegart, then of Danvers.

St. Luke's continued to widen its influence so that in 1942, it had a membership of thirty-eight voting members, one hundred sixty communicant members and two hundred fifty souls. Pastor Timm served for thirteen years before going to Chapin.

In 1944, the Rev. R. F. Kloehn was called to serve the congregation. He was pastor until 1946. During this time, a portion of the membership was released and they organized a congregation in Mason City. A parsonage was purchased in Mason City across from the High School in 1944. Prior to this living quarters for the pastor had been rented.

Student Myron E. Wackler was installed as the third full time pastor on July 11, 1947, serving faithfully until January 27, 1952, when he accepted the call to the Thomasboro congregation. During this period of time, an electronic Connsonata organ was purchased. the Walther League presented to the congregation, a gift of new hymn books. A six-room ranch type parsonage was built in San Jose in 1949. At this time the parsonage in Mason City was sold and San Jose became the official residence of the pastor. In the fall of 1951 the present gas heating system was installed and the kitchen facilities were enlarged.

Student Raymond E. Stuckwisch was called to serve the congregation and was ordained and installed on July 6, 1952. He served the church with great zeal until he accepted the call extended to him from a missionary church in Decatur in November, 1954.

Improvements continued to be made with the tiling of the floor of the church parlors as a major project. The congregation also received a Baptismal Font in memory of Robert Deiss by his mother and the Public Relations Department of Caterpillar.

St. Luke's was vacant until November 6, 1955 when the present pastor, the Rev. Robert O. Wudy was called from his parish in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, where he had served for seven years.

Recent improvements and additions have been: Chancel pew purchased, rose grain in color, on January 6, 1956; rest room construction begun on February 20, 1956, completed on March 30, 1956, with an above average of men aiding in this project, and the ladies of the congregation serving both lunch and a full dinner each day; new bulletin board installed in vestibule by Melvin Maaks on February 17, 1956; choir robes for the organist and the Children and Senior Choirs for Easter 1956; pulpit and lectern lights in memory of Jacob Imig by his widow; exhaust fan by Mrs. Mary Stansbury in memory of Edward, and Mrs. Anna Hiller in memory of Henry in July, 1956; Choir robe closet was built by Merrill Chester in February, 1957; in March, 1957, a Communion Rail was given by the Leaguers and a lighted cross on the belfry by Emerson Leinweber II; and new tables for the church parlors by the Martha-Mary Society and the Sunday School in April, 1957.

St. Luke's has regular Sunday School and worship services every Sunday at 9:30 and 10:30 respectively. In addition to a Children's choir and a Senior choir, there are several active organizations. The Martha-Mary Society is the official women's organization. The official young people's organization is the Walther League. The men's organization is the Lutheran Layman's League. For young married folks, a Couples Club is active. Each organization has regular monthly meetings.

Three committees, Stewardship, Education and Evangelism have aided in increasing the full spiritual life and dedication of the congregation. Meeting each month, these committees, along with the worship services, the Sunday School, the Adult Bible Class and the four organizations, serve as a means of positive practice of faith in action.

St. Luke's is making plans at present to celebrate fifty years of the Lord's richest blessings. Next Year, 1958, during the month of May, the congregation will, God willing, humbly note fifty years of its existence in holding high the lamp of the pure Gospel and the invitation to one and all to find Jesus and His sacrifice on Calvary's Cross, their Savior and their Master in all their doings and life.

Assemblies of God Congregation and and Pastors Build Own Church

The Assemblies of God Church, located at the corner of East Arch and South Tonica Streets in Mason City is a member of the Illinois District of the Assemblies of God with state headquarters in Springfield, Illinois and national headquarters in Springfield, Missouri. The Assemblies of God organization is especially noted for their evangelistic effort and missionary vision.

The local church had its beginning from revival meeting and cottage prayer meetings held in Easton and

Mason City. In 1933 Evangelist Thelma Wilkens held the first revival in Easton in the building now occupied by the Easton Enterprise. She returned in 1935 with a co-worker, Evangelist Evelyn Bobas, and they conducted a revival in the Red Oak community in a building which has since been torn down.

In November 1935 Mr. and Mrs. William Tabbs Sr. of Atlanta, Illinois, rented the building which now houses Craggs Welding Shop on North Tonica Street, Mason City, from G. D. Childs. They, with a group of Assemblies of God people from Easton and Lincoln began with a Mission with Mr. and Mrs. Tabbs serving as Evangelists.

They were later joined by Rev. and Mrs. Elvis King in the Mission work. There were a number of people converted and Rev. and Mrs. King remained in Mason City to serve as pastor of the Mission.

In 1937 two lots located at East Arch and South Tonica Streets were purchased from G. D. Childs. Consrtuction on the church was begun immediately with members and pastor donating the labor. At about this time a group of Pentecostal believers from the Greenview community became affiliated with the local group. The church was completed and dedicated in November, 1937, with the Rev. Arthur Bell who then served as State Superintendent of the Assemblies of God, presiding and bringing the dedicatorial message.

Rev. and Mrs. King resigned as pastors in 1938 and Mr. and Mrs. Walter Smith were then called. They remained until 1940, and the church then called Rev. and Mrs. Glen Utley, who served as pastor for about six months. The Rev. and Mrs. Leroy Filby then accepted the pastorate and remained until 1941, when the Rev. and Mrs. John Warton were called. After their resignation in 1943, Rev. Kenneth Squires accepted the pastorate. During his stay here the church interior was redecorated and a new furnace installed. After his resignation in 1945, the Rev. and Mrs. Paul McCaulley were called. While they were here more improvements were made. The main project was the adding of two rest rooms in the church basement.

They terminated their stay in August, 1948, and the present pastor the Rev. and Mrs. Kenneth Wallace accepted the pastorate in September, 1948.

In August, 1949, construction began on a parsonage adjacent to the church. The basement was completed in November and served as living quarters for the pastor and his family for two years. The superstructure was built and dedicated in 1951 with all the labor donated by the congregation.

In 1950 the young people's organization known as the "Christ's Ambassadors" was formed and became affiliated with the state and national organization.

The Sunday School Annex was begun in 1955. This includes seven additional Sunday School classrooms, Sunday School staff office, Pastor's study and a Young People's auditorium.

There have been a number of other improvements such as two new gas furnaces, purchase of a Baby Grand piano, church auditorium and basement remodeled and redecorated, carpeting in the sanctuary, air conditioning and aluminum siding on the outside of the church.

Along with the eight pastors who have served the church, a number of evangelists and missionaries have contributed to the growth of the church.

— Fink Photo

Their sacrificial giving and the active faith of the congregation has been the vital factor in its continuous advancement. Their vision to give the gospel to a lost world and provide a spirit of holiness to this community is the mark of its success.

Christ Lutheran Church Congregation Has Mason City's Newest Church

— Fink Photo

In the early 1880's there were some German families who gathered in their homes for church services. These homes were located mostly on the south side of town and the services were conducted in the German language, since those early settlers could speak very little English. In the year 1886, records show the first Lutheran congregation was organized. A church was built at 301 North Tonica Street, where the new home of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Moehring Sr. was built in 1956.

Pastors from neighboring cities served the needs of the congregation for several years. Records show that in 1894, the Rev. Henry Schwandt was called to be pastor of the congregation and resided at 312 South Morgan and later on East Elm Street. He was followed by Rev. Krueger who officiated at the church in the early 1900's. He resided at 107 North Keefer Street, the house now the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Glick.

Following Rev. Krueger, the church was again served by neighboring pastors. Rev. M. H. A. Guemmer of New Holland served the need of the congregation for more than forty years. Services were held Sunday afternoons and in the winter months services were held every other week. In the horse and buggy days, the roads would become impassable, but Rev. Guemmer walked the distance from New Holland by way of the railroad track many, many times, in order to supply the needs of the congregation.

Then came the time when the congregation felt the need of Sunday School and morning worship hour. A meeting of the congregation and Pastor Guemmer was held in April, 1946, at which time it was decided to make this change. Students of Concordia Seminary at Springfield assisted with services, a Sunday School was organized to include all classes, the church edifice was redecorated and electric lights were installed.

At the end of the Seminary's school year in June, 1946, candidate Leroy Hass, who had been conducting most of the services and had put in much time here in instructing the children and adults, began to serve as full time pastor. On August 25, 1946, ten adults were confirmed by him. In September, he continued his studies at the seminary and is now serving as a missionary to Japan.

Then again from September, 1946, to August, 1947, Christ Church was served by a student vicar from the Concordia Seminary, Rev. George Krengel. Pastor Guemmer from New Holland still conducted the communion services. In February, 1948, a call was sent to candidate George Krengel to be the congregation's resident pastor. He was ordained and installed as pastor on August 15, 1948 by the Rev. M. H. A. Guemmer.

In March, 1948, the congregation had purchased property on the northwest corner of Tonica and Walnut Streets. Here they erected a completely modern parsonage and garage, Pastor Krengel and family being the first to reside in it.

The congregation kept growing and the little church could no longer accommodate the many worshipers, so plans were made to erect a new church. Mr. H. Eugene Hartzell was engaged as architect. In the spring of 1951, work was begun in earnest. The building committee was Koert Renken, chairman, Edward Hindahl, Louis Moehring Sr., Richard Schaub, Walter Behrends, Gerhard Harms, Richard Rabbe, Arthur Hanel and Stanley Campbell. This committee engaged Mr. A. J. C. Woiwode of Forest City as contractor. Most of the members of the church assisted with tractors, trucks and manual labor so the new church could be readied for use as soon as possible. On Easter Sunday, April 13, 1952, the new church building was dedicated with the Rev. George Krengel as the pastor. The last service in the old church was held the same morning with communion. In the afternoon at three o'clock, architect H. Eugene Hartzell cut the ribbon, Mr. A. J. C. Woiwode then gave the key to Mr. Koert Renken, chairman of the building committee who in turn gave it to Mr. William Rabbe, then chairman of the congregation. He unlocked the door and the church was opened to the congregation for services. The Rev. E. F. Tonn was the speaker for the afternoon and Mrs. Mary Joy Ewers was the organist. Services were held the following five nights, each evening one of the organizations, like the Walther League, the Dorcas Society, etc. being responsible for the speaker.

The Rev. Krengel left May 24, 1953 and then the congregation was served by Rev. Borchelt of Manito as vacancy pastor for eleven months.

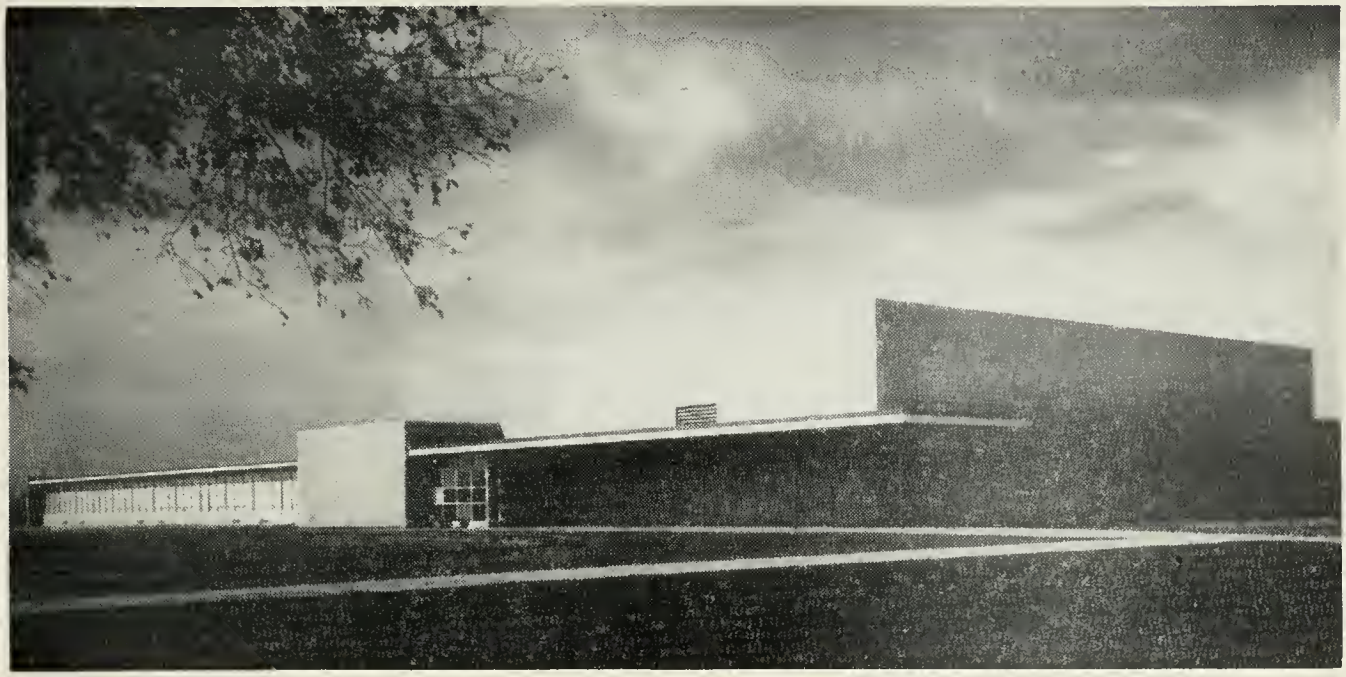
A call was extended to our present pastor, the Rev. R. H. Lawrenz at Boyd, Minnesota. He graduated from Concordia Seminary of Springfield, Illinois in June, 1950 and was ordained and installed as minister at Royalton, Minnesota. He accepted the charge and was installed in Christ Lutheran Church in May, 1954, by the Rev. Borchelt. Rev. Lawrenz is now also serving as vacancy pastor of New Holland Lutheran Church. The congregation in Mason City is grateful for the privilege of assisting Zion Church of New Holland since their pastor formerly served Mason City church for so many years.

When reorganization took place in 1946, the congregation numbered approximately 37 communicant members, 51 souls. Since that time there have been the following additions: 29 children and 62 adults confirmed, 99 children and 14 adults baptised. There had been 16 burials and 14 couples united in Holy matrimony.

Now, eleven years later, as of Easter Sunday, 1957, there are appriximately 340 souls, 205 communicant members, and 125 in Sunday School attendance, Last year's Vacation Bible School (summer 1956) had 125 in daily attendance. A Kindergarten school was started in the fall of 1956 with 27 enrolled. The Dorcas Society has 36 members; Layman's League, 22 members; Lydia Guild 17 members; Walther League, 20 members and a Junior Choir of 16 members with Miss Alice Nafziger as leader, was started in the fall of 1956.

Errors of omission, typographical errors, misspelling, and oversight will be rectified and acknowledged in the next Centennial booklet to be published in the year 2057. Please contact the committee at that time.

Fine Schools to Educate Mason City Youth
Keep Pace Through the Years



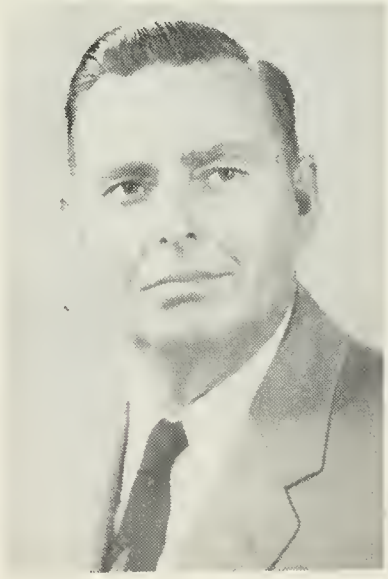
Mason City's Fine New Elementary School Building

Mason City's first public school was established in 1858 in the upper room of the town's second store building. This two-story frame structure had been built by Henry Keefer and was occupied by the Cargill and Woodward General Store. It was located about a half block south of East Elm Street on South Tonica Street. The building was later moved to the rear of the lot now occupied by the Arlee Theatre, at 139 South Main Street, and was converted into a blacksmith shop. It was torn down in 1931.

Later in 1858 the school was moved to the second story of the Elliott building then standing where Lee Brothers Department Store is now located, near the corner of North Tonica and East Chestnut Streets.

The first building built exclusively for school purposes was a two-room frame structure located just north of the present Virgil Mangold residence in the one hundred block on the east side of North Menard Street. This was in 1860.

Mason City was growing rapidly and soon several rooms downtown had to be used as additional school rooms. During this period there were also several private or "select" schools in operation. One school for girls was in the Hibberd home at the north edge of town. This place is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Rabbe. Another — for both boys and girls, was at 312 North Keefer Street, now the home of Mr. and Mrs. John See. The second floor of the small brick building that stood where Moslander's Shell Service Station is now located at the corner of South Main and West Elm Streets was also used as a private school.



— Fink Photo

James Smith
Principal of the Elementary School

The first pretentious school building was erected in 1868 on the West Side School block. It was a three-story brick building. This building was condemned in 1883 and the third story was removed in make the building safe to use as a school. The story goes that some of the air shafts were converted into chimneys, there being no central heating plant. The result was that in 1888 the

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and proud to have played a part in the progress of the city.

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(deceased)

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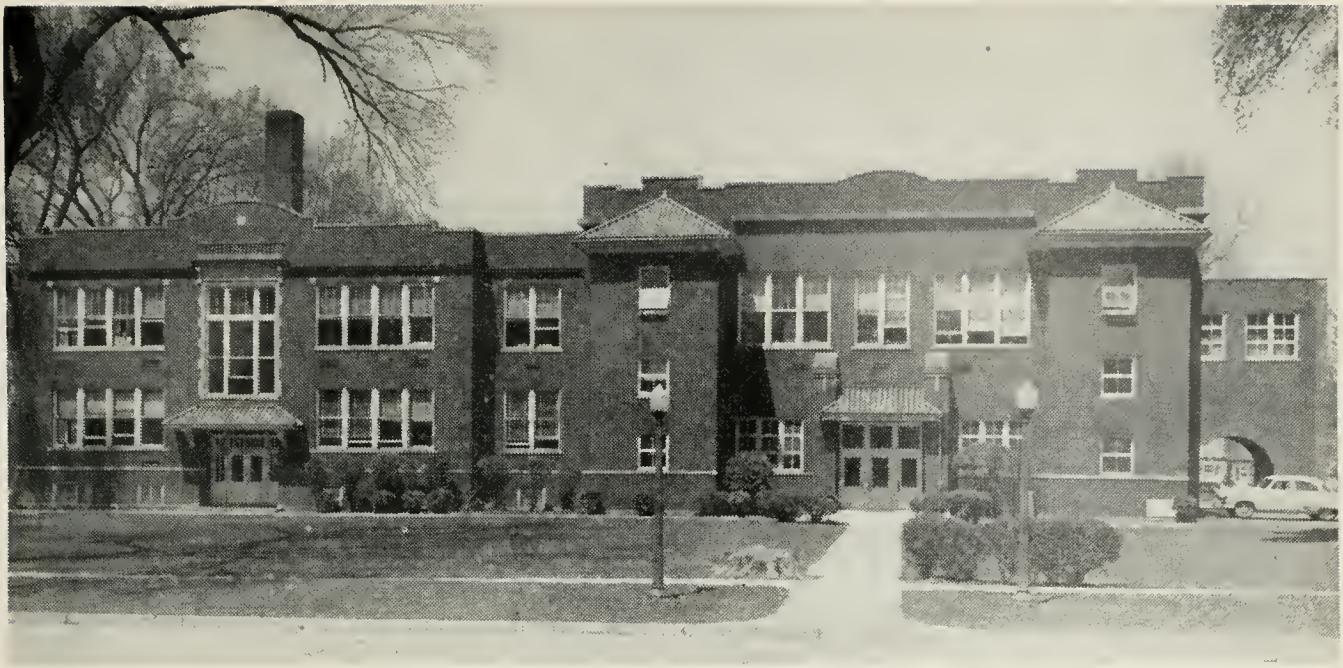

— Fink Photo

Mason City Community Unit High School

building was destroyed by fire. A new building was erected on the block and it became known as the High School building although both high school and grade school classes were held there for years. This building was razed in the summer of 1956 after having been put out of use the previous year.

The first school house built on the East Side School block was constructed in 1882. It was destroyed by fire in 1890 and the present building was constructed soon afterwards. Mr. J. F. Culp, father of J. S. and R. D. Culp was the architect for this building. All of these buildings were built of locally made bricks by local labor, working under contractors.

In 1917 the demands of the community for more school facilities became so great that an addition was built just west of the old West Side building. The buildings were connected by an archway and heated from one plant located in the basement of the old building. This new addition consisted of a number of classrooms, office, a large assembly room and a gymnasium. It was built and owned by School District No. 11. In 1920 Mason City Community High School District No. 504 was organized and that district purchased the newly built addition from District No. 11.

In 1929 the High School Board erected another addition to the west side of the building containing a heating plant and more modern classrooms. Then in the late '30's the Board built another smaller addition to the north of the first addition for music, commercial and farm shop uses. Particular pains were made to make these additions match the architectural style of the high school buliding.

Community Unit School District No. 123 was founded in 1949 and this placed an additional burden on the capacities of the school buildings. An attempt was made in 1950 to pass a bond issue for the erection of a high school building at the north edge of town. This was defeated. In 1951 the gymnasium was completely remodeled and enlarged. A school cafeteria was built on the north end of the gym. This did not solve the problem of antiquated grade school buildings and the ever-increasing school population. On July 17, 1954 the proposals to sell $425,000.00 in school bonds for the purpose of erecting a new Elementary school building on land bought from W. D. Huffman at the end of West Pine Street and $25,000.00 for the addition of a shop building on the high school were submitted to the people of the community

— Fink Photo

W. A. Sanders

Superintendent of Mason City Community Unit School District Number 123

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and these propositions were accepted. The new buildings were dedicated on Sunday, November 13, 1955.

Faculty List for the 1956-'57 School Term

Elementary School

Esther Brinner and Marion Earl	First Grade
Gladys Wilkinson and Ruth Beames	Second Grade
Pat Gregory, Mabel Montgomery and Helen Lager	Third Grade
Tegia McBride and Lois Brown	Fourth Grade
Marie Carroll and Juanita Gates	Fifth Grade
Leola Vaughn and Marie Corbin	Sixth Grade
Geraldine Godbey and Adam Hibbs	Seventh Grade
Mabel Carey	Eighth Grade
John Earl	Eighth Grade and Assistant Principal

High School

Marvin Block	Social Studies
Martin Chilovich	Coach, Physical Training
Carol Kreiling	Commercial Subjects
Betty Lanter	Speech and English
Rose Leamon	Girls Physical Training
Nelson Morris	Instrumental Music
Theresa Myers	Vocal Music
Wade Nicodemus	Science and Driver Training
Richard Peak	English
Joseph Potts	Spanish and Art
Phillip Seyfried	Mathematics and Elementary Coach
Marilyn Steiger	Homemaking
Irven Sutton	Industrial Arts
Eschol Gates	Vocational Agriculture

James Smith	Elementary School Principal
W. A. Sanders	Superintendent of Schools

Recognized and Accredited Schools

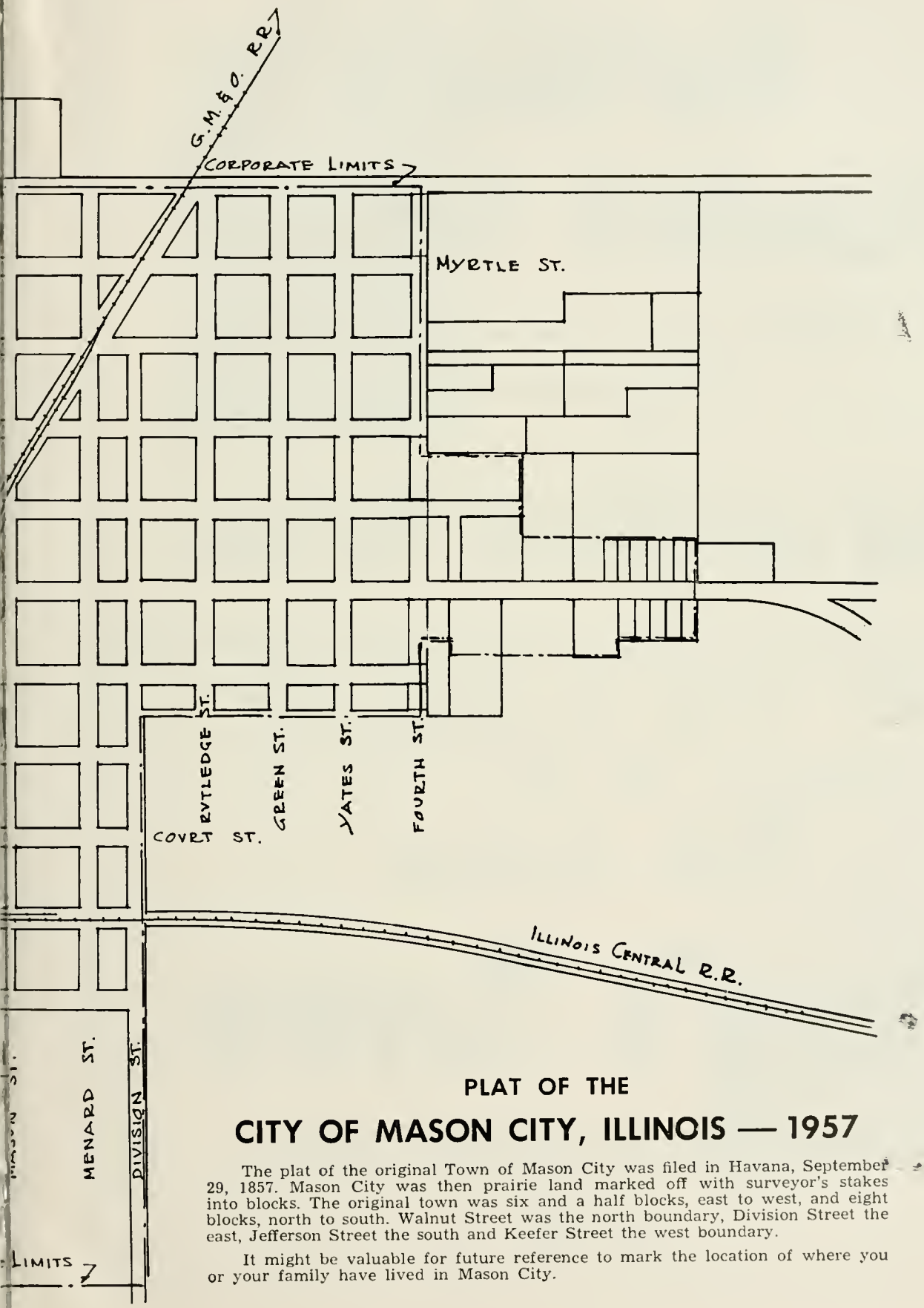
The Mason City Community Unit Schools are fully recognized and accredited grades 1 thru 12 by the State Department of the State of Illinois and by the University of Illinois. In addition the High School is fully accredited by the North Central Association of High Schools and Colleges.

— Fink Photo

BOARD OF EDUCATION — Mason City Community Unit School District No. 123

Seated: (left to right) Ward Montgomery, Secretary; Paul V. Martinie, President; Stanley McCreery; William Rabbe.
Standing: Dr. Jack Brown; Harvey Rutledge; Carl Bitner.

WEST ST.
ROOSEVELT - NORTH
MAIN ST.
MARKED RTE 29
CORPORATE LIMITS
WALNVT ST.
HIGH ST.
PINE ST.
CHESTNVT ST.
ELM ST.
ARCH ST.
PARK ST.
JEFFERSON ST.
PRAIRIE ST.
IRVING ST.
PERRY ST.
KEEFER
MARKED ROUTE 29
S. B. I. RTE. 24
LOGAN ST.
MORGAN ST.
OLD ALTON R.R.
G.M.&O.
TONICA ST.



PLAT OF THE

CITY OF MASON CITY, ILLINOIS — 1957

The plat of the original Town of Mason City was filed in Havana, September 29, 1857. Mason City was then prairie land marked off with surveyor's stakes into blocks. The original town was six and a half blocks, east to west, and eight blocks, north to south. Walnut Street was the north boundary, Division Street the east, Jefferson Street the south and Keefer Street the west boundary.

It might be valuable for future reference to mark the location of where you or your family have lived in Mason City.

Martinie's Standard Service

A Quarter of a Century of Progress
Through Service

Compliments Of

Paul and Mildred Martinie

BEST WISHES TO MASON CITY
ON ITS

100th Birthday

Poggi's Tavern

SILVIO and GERALDINE POGGI
owners

History of Mason City Post Office

A. A. Cargill

A. A. Cargill, pioneer merchant, was Mason City's first Postmaster, receiving his appointment from President Buchanan in 1858.

Mason City's first Post Office was established on September 22, 1858 and was located in the Cargill and Woodward General Store. Today Mason City has a beautiful red brick structure built in 1941 at a cost of $70,000.00 as a Public Works Administration project. This spacious, federal-owned building is located in the northwest corner of the block bounded by West Chestnut and South Morgan Streets — one block from the business district.

A. A. Cargill was the first postmaster, having received his appointment from President Buchanan, a year after the town was established.

It was extremely difficult to transport mail in the first years. Edgar Hunt was hired by private subscription to carry mail to and from Petersburg once a week, on horseback, averaging two days for the journey. Bad weather often delayed the trip from two to four weeks. To avoid flooded trails the distribution point was later changed to Delavan. This slow method continued about four years until the government established routes from Delavan to Petersburg and from Lincoln to Havana.

According to official records Mason City Post Office received its first mail service once a week on a route from Petersburg, by Mason City and Altoona to Delavan. The contractor for this service was John Warner of Clinton, Illinois. The earliest available record of compensation to the postmaster at Mason City shows that for three-quarters of the fiscal year 1859 he received $23.28. The net receipts for the same period are shown to have been $17.77.

There have been 15 men and two women postmasters during the 99 years of operation. Following A. A. Cargill, Israel Hibberd was appointed on January 7, 1860. Others are listed in order of their appointment: Emesiah J. Mell, July 30, 1866; John H. Cleveland, February 15, 1869; Miss Sallie C. Sullivan, December 28, 1870; Miss Louise Hoyt, October 31, 1872; Joseph S. Baner, December 10, 1873; Wells Corey, December 20, 1881; William A. Mehan, January 13, 1886; James L. Hastings, January 9, 1890; Charles E. Chamblin, February 2, 1894; Samuel B. Roach, February 7, 1898; Claude L. Stone, April 19, 1909; Thomas N. Sutton, June 5, 1913; Delta C. Lowe, February 24, 1922; John A. Peters, May 8, 1934 and W. Harold McCreery, May 8, 1954.

Rural Free Delivery Service was instituted in Mason City Post Office on September 1, 1903 with two routes served by George W. Tongate and William T. Keen. There are now three rural routes serving the rural community surrounding Mason City and covering 144 miles of rural roads and serving 401 families.

City Delivery of mail was begun on August 1, 1919 with George Young as the first City Carrier. Mail is delivered once daily in the residential district and twice daily in the business district. Mail is collected once a day from the residental boxes and twice a day from boxes in the business district. A far cry from the primitive way of mail service one hundred years ago is the new "Courtesy Box" now in front of the Post Office where people can drive up in their cars and deposit mail without even having the inconvenience of getting out of the car.

— Fink Photo

W. Harold McCreery

Postmaster of Mason City Post Office in the Centennial year — 1957.

Compliments of

BRINNER BROTHERS

Serving Mason City and Area for
Over 46 Years with Quality

Hardware - Furniture - Appliances - Gifts

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Fords

Have been furnishing the people of this community with economical and dependable transportotion for over half a century.

We can justifiably be proud that through all of these years Ford has lead in the advancement of the automibile industry to produce more efficient and beautiful automobiles.

Dixon Motor Co.

Sales and Service — *C. F. Dixon, proprietor*

120 N. Main St. — **Mason City, Illinois**

Personnel of Mason City Post Office in its 99th year (1957) is as follows: W. Harold McCreery, postmaster; Vernon B. Pruett, assistant postmaster; Harry F. Webb, clerk; Francis W. Blanc, clerk; Lee J. Cutright, city carrier; Paul O. Lockenour, city carrier; Carl D. Tomlin, Rural Route I carrier; Oscar R. Yardley Jr., Rural Route II carrier; D. Clyde Lowe, Rural Route III carrier, Henry D. Schmidt, custodian; Walter E. Gilmore assistan custodian.

Mason City Post Office has an enviable record of efficiency in the department. The patronage of the office has grown tremendously through the years.

FINK PHOTO

Mason City Post Office

Old Settlers of Mason City

. . . these names recall Centennial memories

The Old Settlers of Eastern Mason County were organized on July 4, 1906 and for a number of years held annual reunions. The passing of time brought about the necessary disbandment of the society. Following is a list of members in 1911. Many of the family names are in use here even in this Centennial year.

Charter Members: Israel Howell, C. L. Stone, R. J. Onstott, Mrs. A. R. Ambrose, Kinzie Virgin, David Powell, Mrs. E. O. Cates, Norman Ingraham, Mrs. Belinda Hess, Jackson Rountree, Mrs. M. E. Suman, H. Cogdall, Sheridan Eulass, S. R. Hess, Josiah McKnight, Mrs. M. A. Van Loon, John Taylor, R. N. Osborn, Mrs. N. J. Miller, Mrs. E. Cadwalleder, Allen Brooner, Mrs. Lucy Cogdall, Mrs. Comfort Dare, Joseph Hibberd, Mrs. Phoebe Hess, Robert C. Davidson, Mrs. Ann Wandell, E. B. Tomlin, J. T. Tomlin, James Jackson, Mrs. J. F. Culp, Jeff Donavan, James Sweeney and Mrs. E. J. Mell. Members: Henry Wakeman, P. W. Peck, Mrs. A. B. Allen, Andy Barton, Mrs. Sarah W. Randall, J. F. Ambrose, J. C. Wagoner, J. F. Culp, Mrs. Eliza Moslander, H. A. McHarry, John Woodward, Sidney Branch, J. S. Walker, Mrs. M. A. Walker, W. E. LeSourd, A. P. Benscoter, Lyman Lacey, Mrs. C. E. Mehan, W. H. Hole, A. A. McKinney, C. W. Pugh, Mrs. Julia Deweese, C. H. Gilmore, J. R. Walker, A. L. Houchin, Mrs. Allie Ambrose, Mrs. Martha Bridges, Mrs. Lucy Ginn, Jacob Yardley, J. W. Short, F. N. Chester, Mrs. W. H. Hole, Hickman B. Samuell, T. E. Randall, Mrs. M. A. Milby, John Hill, A. Tomlin, M. Barton, C. W. Tyler, Mrs. W. F. Ritter, Mrs. George Yost, E. Wharram, Mrs. Sarah Walker, G. Chat Ely, S. B. Spear, Mrs. Sarah A. Chester, Wm. Swiger, Miss E. VanHorn, Mrs. G. N. Kern, F. M. Castleberry, Mrs. F. M. Castleberry, Mrs. A. Tomlin, Wilson Griffin, Fred Tyler, Mrs. P. T. Cooper, George Yost, Mrs. C. A. Patterson and Mrs. Ruth Hamlin. Associate Members: Ben C. Rickard and Mrs. E. T. Hibberd.

Protect Profits with . . .

Nu-Pro-Ces Hog Mineral

for large, lively litters . . . fast growth . . . profitable gain

Nu-Pro-Ces All-Purpose Mineral

to protect all livestock from profit-destroying deficiencies

NU-PRO-CES Minerals!

NU-PRO-CES minerals provide ample amounts of calcium, phosphorus and all known trace minerals — plus irradiated yeast, vitamin D-2 and feeding molasses. Hog mineral formulated with **animal** protein.

Ask for them at your Favorite Dealer

Handy 50 lb. Bags

Also NU-PRO-CES MINERAL BLOCKS

manufactured by

FABER INDUSTRIES, INC., MASON CITY, ILL.

Compliments of

Cranwill's

Bar and Fine Food

Air Conditioned

Entertainment

West of town on Route 10

Telephone Company Fifty Years Old

The first telephone service in Mason City was on a toll line established in 1883 with one telephone placed in Onstott's Book Store and Confectionery. The toll line had been built by the Bell Company between Springfield and Peoria and this one phone proved to be a wonderful convenience to people in this area. At that time Onstott's Store was in the three-story building now occupied by Finks Photo Service at 138 East Chestnut street. Later R. J. Onstott moved to the building then located just east of where the former Central Illinois State Bank Building is now located at about where Fred Schumacher's Shoe Shop is now located) about 109 East Chestnut. The telephone exchange was moved to its new location where it grew to include two country lines and about 50 city phones. The Bell Co. established the Central Union Telephone Exchange in 1903 in the room above the Farmers Bank Building which was then doing business at 121 East Chestnut in the building now used by Brinner Brothers to display furniture. A switchboard was installed and put into use to connect the phones of 116 subscribers on two party lines. Sixteen of these subscribers were on country lines. Miss Lena Harp (now Mrs. Ralph D. Culp) who had been day operator for two and a half years for Onstott continued on in the same capacity for Central Union. Roy Swiger was night operator and day assistant. Miss Harp was succeeded as day operator by Sadie Hinegardner. The Central Union Exchange sold $5.00 coupon books for $4. The coupons were taken out in payment for messages until the coupons were all used and the patron was ready for a new book.

For a while there were two telephone offices here — The Central Union Telephone Exchange and the Independent Co. This latter company had been founded by 12 business firms and professional men for their common good, about 1900. A line was built out of Teheran and later to Easton and the Independent subscribers had the privilege of free telephone service to those villages. The 12 original stockholders were: W. A. Grandy, lumber; J. F. Culp, undertaker; H. F. Reason and G. C. Ely, implements; Dr. C. A. Stone, physician; George N. Kern, blacksmith; Dr. C. W. Cargill, physician; Albert Cross, livery; Lud Davis, livery; C. A. McHarry and Bruce Chenoweth, implements; Dr. J. W. Spear, physician; and J. S. McElheney, poultry and junk. Each firm had a telephone connected in series on this line. About 1903 the group decided to install a switchboard in the room above the Allen Bradley Drug Store, now occupied by Charis Sundries, 122 East Chestnut. There were 25 telephone connected to this office together with several country lines and the Teheran line. First operators on this switchboard were Edith Benham, Flossie Mattson, (Mrs. Henry Oldenstadt), Merle Entwistle and Callie Cooper.

It was decided to incorporate the Independent Co. and found The Mason City Telephone and Telegraph Co. with an issue of $2,500 in stock. The corporation received its charter from the State of Illinois dated January 5, 1907. The capitalization of the new company was raised to $7,500 in April, 1907. The switchboard was moved to the upstairs room of the Warner building now occupied by the Palmer Market at 147 East Chestnut in December, 1907. Callie Cooper was the first operator in this new location. At the time of the move to the Warner building the company had 100 phones installed and the switchboard was connected to Bell Telephone toll lines and toll lines to Havana and Lincoln.

J. F. Culp was the manager from 1907 to 1913. The Central Union Exchange was acquired in 1908. Ralph D. Culp became manager in 1913 and resigned in 1932. Raymond McCreery then became manager and following his death in 1934 his wife, Mrs. Louise McCreery, was selected by the Board of Directors to take the position. She continues on as manager of this progressive local corporation.

The Mason City Telephone and Telegraph Co. bought the one story building located at 141 East Chestnut from Charles Dietrich on October 4, 1941. Extensive repairs were made and the building was converted into a modern telephone exchange with the manager's office in the front. Since that time the building has been completely remodeled with a full basement and air conditioning. The telephone system has also undergone a complete modernization with a change over from magneto to common battery service in 1953. The company now has 252 country switching phones, 100 city business phones and 720 residence city phones. Two maintenance men and ten swithchboard operators are regularly employed.

The Board of Directors of the company at this time is Horace Whitney, president; Robert L. McNeil, vice president; Stanley McCreery; Claude J. Martin; and Mrs. Louise McCreery, secretary and manager.

Due For Another Change

Two other street scenes of East Chestnut Street have been shown. The scene has been changed again. New, mercury-vapor street lights have been installed and soon the old cluster lights that have been giving service since 1914 will be moved to outlying streets.

Congratulations!

To the residents of Mason City, Illinois
on the occasion of your
CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY.

We are proud to be identified with your progressive community.

ILLICO INDEPENDENT OIL CO.

SUPPLIERS OF QUALITY PETROLEUM PRODUCTS TO THE FARMERS AND MOTORISTS OF CENTRAL ILLINDIS FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS.

GAIL POTTORF
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"The place to go for the brands you know"

The Kozy Hat and Dress Shop

Millinery and Ready To Wear

PHONE 165-J MASON CITY

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PROPRIETORS

MASON COUNTY FARM BUREAU

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Best Wishes To
MASON CITY
On Her 100th Birthday

POSTAL EMPLOYEES

HAROLD MCCREERY
VERNON PRUETT
FRANK WEBB
WAYNE BLANE
LEE CUTRIGHT
PAUL LOCKENOUR
CARL TOMLIN
RUSSEL YARDLEY
CLYDE LOWE
HENRY SCHMIDT
WALTER GILMORE

The St. Nicholas Hotel

A picture of the St. Nicholas Hotel as it appeared in 1910. This three-story hostelry was located at the southwest corner of South Main and West Elm Streets. It was quite favorably known in the early days of Mason City. The hotel was razed to make way for the erection of W. T. Ainsworth & Sons downtown Seed Corn drying plant. Changing methods of seed corn drying outmoded the plant and in 1946-1947 Daryl C. Mathers supervised the complete remodeling of the building into the present buildings occupied by Shawgo's L. P. Gas Service and Johnson's Super-Way Market.

Pioneered Electrical Service

In 1889, J. B. Abbott and his three sons, Ira, Richard and Albert, made plans and started construction of a generating plant to furnish residential, commercial and street lighting electrical service within Mason City. This original plant consisted of one horizontal cylinder engine with a belt drive to a 133 cycle, single phase, 110 volt generator which is believed to have been 25KVA or about 33 horsepower capacity.

Energy from this plant was distributed over a single phase, 110 volt distribution line on 25 foot poles. The service transformers, to reduce the voltage to 110 volts for customer use, were generally hung on the side of the first house in each area of service and as other residents were added to the service the lines were run from house to house by any routing deemed practical at the time. The city was the Abbott's chief customer by using current for 50 carbon arc lights to light principal street intersections.

The demand for electrical current grew and in 1892 the Abbotts built a plant in Petersburg. In 1910 the company built a three phase 16,500 volt transmission line from Petersburg to Mason City at which time the Mason City plant was shut down and all the electric energy was produced in Petersburg. The Abbott company was under a constant program of expansion and improvement to keep pace with the demand for more and more electrical energy during the succeeding years until in 1923 it was decided that a privately owned utility would find it difficult to keep up the pace and for this reason the Abbott Light and Power Co. was sold to the Central Illinois Public Service Co. This company has continued to supply Mason City with an abundance of dependable electric energy. This has been done by leading new transmission lines into the area from the huge generating plants the company has built at strategic locations in Illinois and by constantly increasing the capacity of transformers and electric lines.

It can hardly be featured that J. B. Abbott or his sons could have visualized how the electric industry has developed and we ourselves probably understimate its potential in the next 100 years.

David Becker is the local representative and maintenance man for C.I.P.S. in Mason City and surrounding area.

A Once Busy Place

In the years before the advent of highway bus and truck service and parcel post the Railroad depots were among the busiest spots in town. All travel was done by railroad and people traveled in those days as now. This picture shows the old C. & A. depot. Huge loads of freight and express were delivered by dray and hand cart throughout the town.

CRAGG'S IRON WORKS

- Ornamental Iron Work
- General Welding

CONGATULATIONS . . .

to

Mason City

on your

Centennial

Anniversary !

We're proud to have played a part in Mason City's progress, furnishing dependable Low-Cost Electricity for nearly half of this Century.

MORE POWER TO and FOR YOU !

REDDY IS READY NOW — WITH PLENTY
REDDY WIL KEEP AHEAD FOR THE FUTURE

CENTRAL ILLINOIS PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY

LOW COST ESSENTIAL SERVICE
TO INDUSTRY, BUSINESS, FARM AND HOME

MASON CITY NATIONAL BANK

MASON CITY, ILLINOIS

SERVING THIS COMMUNITY AND SURROUNDING AREA

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WELCOME to Mason City, Illinois

CENTENNIAL 1957

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JUDY HAGLUND
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135 S. MAIN ST. — MASON CITY

"The Good Earth" Our Greatest Resource

Pioneers shunned the swampy prairie lands in the early days of Illinois' development and built their settlements near navigable streams or on the few old established land routes. The few, hardy folks who did settle in the groves bordering the prairie led self-sufficient lives, each cabin being a unit industry in which almost every need was satisfied by the skill of individual members of the family. Life was indeed full of toil in that primitive time. The eternal struggle to produce a little more food than was required for their own use, to make their own clothing, and to suffer from the malarial chills and fever so prevalent on the prairie was a lot that few people desired to experience.

The coming of the railroads was the great factor contributing to the rapid development of the prairie land in the years following the Civil War. The prairie sod was broken, the swampy spots drained and farmsteads built until in the early 1870's the rural population of this area far exceeded the number of our present rural population. Of necessity, the farms were fairly small because 80 acres was about all one man and his family with their simple horse-drawn farm implements could care for.

For a few years it was thought that Mason City, Illinois, was going to become a city of size. The business establishments were doing a tremendous business and the town was booming. However, Mason City showed little evidence of becoming industrialized. It was only by a quirk of fortune that Mason City did not become a division point for the first railroad that built its line through here. At one time there was a Round House in the Railroad Park (across the tracks from the present G.M. & O.R.R. station). At that time locomotives could be turned around there and headed back toward Jacksonville. Dining cars on the Chicago-Kansas City run laid over here. Up to the late 1930's Mason City was always blessed with excellent passenger and freight service by rail.

Small Industries That Have Gone

Brick for many of the older buildings in town was made from several locally operated yards. Some of the holes made by digging clay for the bricks can still be seen near here. The city has used a couple of the holes as depositories for tin cans and rubbish and has filled them to ground level. Erosion of the soil through the years is slowly smoothing out the other evidence of this early day industry. However, the sites of the Seward brickyard at the end of South Main Street and the Dietrich and Rissinger yard at the first curve of Route 29 south of town are still easy to see. Brick makers of Mason City were the Sewards, Dietrich & Rissinger and Adolph Walters.

Mason City also had its ice houses in which ice, cut from ponds in the winter time and stored, packed with saw dust, was kept for hot weather use. There were mills used to grind grain into flour and at one time many thousands of bushels of corn were kiln dried every fall for shipment to Chicago. Other small industries that have developed to furnish employment for Mason City people have been cigar factories, a cob pipe factory, a carriage and wagon factory, poultry dressing plants, a laundry, a manure spreader factory, an electric power plant and more recently a branch plant of the Boss Glove Manufacturing Co. These were all of relatively short life and Mason City has always been primarily a merchandising center for a prosperous farming community in which most of the service and necessities for comfortable living

LIBRARY U. OF I. URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Prairie Trails

Motel and Inn

- Air Conditioned
- Fine Food
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7 Miles North of Mason City on Route 29.

Best Wishes
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Best Wishes

MASON CITY

On Your 100th Birthday

AMRHEIM BAKERY

Springfield, Illinois

Compliments Of

Mac's Tavern

Home of

BUDWEISER BEER
On Draft !

are available — a pleasant place for farmers to come to live after retiring from active work, a most wonderful place for children to grow-up, get their education and then leave for the opportunities presented in the big cities or newly developing areas.

Probably the chief contributing factor to the stopping of Mason City's boom in the early 1870's was the completion of the railroad from Urbana to Havana through Mason City. Previous to this Mason City had enjoyed a tremendous trading area. The merchants were able to quickly get any supplies they needed from Chicago or St. Louis over the Chicago and Alton Line. The advent of the new railroad brought about the establishing of other small towns nearby with the resulting shrinkage of our trading area.

The Mine That Failed

In 1889, hopes for industrial growth of Mason City was foremost in the thoughts of the townspeople. The Mason City Coal Co., Inc. was formed and digging operations on a shaft was started. The shaft was located in block 31, lots 2 and 3 near where the Farmers Grain and Co. office is now located. Several veins of coal were reached, the thickest being 34 inches at a depth of 293 feet. The project was abandoned and once again Mason City slowed down to the life of a quiet country town.

Pioneers In Seed Corn Industry

During the first years of the 1900's it became common knowledge among progressive farmers that certain types of seed corn were able to produce greater yields of higher quality corn than others and it was through the efforts of two Mason City farm families that this town became known as the Seed Corn Drying Center of the World.

The G. D. Sutton Company

G. D. Sutton, one time editor of the Mason City Times and son of T. N. Sutton, a farmer living north of town, who later became one of Mason City's postmasters, saw the possibilities of the seed corn business and started a company that developed into the world's largest distributor of seed corn. The business was strictly a new venture and all the details of processing the seed corn had to be developed by a trial and error method and it was largely through the ability of Mason City's pioneers in the seed corn industry that the modern methods of seed corn drying and processing have developed.

Following years of unprecedented growth and prosperity for the firm Mr. Sutton became interested in other ventures and delegated a large share of the company's management of Lloyd G. Ellsberry. In the early 1930's the popularity of hybrid seed corn gained momentum and when the opportunity was presented to sell the business to Funk Bros. Seed Co. of Bloomington, the owners decided to sell and retire from that field of endeavor.

During the thirty or more years of its operation the G. D. Sutton Co. was Mason City's largest industry and its seed corn was sold in all corn producing areas of North America and to many foreign countries.

FUNK BROS. SEED CO., INC.

Funk Bros. Seed Co. came to Mason City in 1937, with the purchase of facilities owned by the Sutton Co., which had been one of the big distributors to open-pollinated seed corn over a period of years. Some of the Ainsworth facilities were also used over a period of years.

Hybrid corn and FUNK'S G-HYBRID in particular, demonstrated its great superiority over open-pollinated corn in the early 1930's and the increased demand for seed resulted in the expansion of the organization in the Mason City territory.

The Mason City area has always enjoyed a favorable situation for the production of seed corn and this continues to be true. Starting with the production of between five and six hundred acres in 1937, production has now expanded to more than two thousand acres which represents the maximum bushelage that can be handled with existing facilities. The trend in hybrid corn plants is the utilization of medium sized facilities rather than extremely large plants.

In addition to commercial seed production in Mason City, Funk Bros. Seed Co. also produces from two to four hundred acres of foundation seed. This is the seed which is planted by contract growers to get the final cross which produces the seed which farmers use.

Since 1937, when Funk Bros. Seed Co. began operations at Mason City, the organization has grown to include twenty-one operating Units, covering all the important corn growing areas in this country and four foreign countries as well, with operations in Canada, Italy, Spain and Argentina.

The president of Funk Bros. Seed Co., Mr. E. D. Funk, Jr., states that the foundation for continued service to the corn farmers of America is based on extensive research which is continually improving existing hybrids and producing new hybrids with superior performance. The Company is now producing seventy-one different hybrids, varying in maturity from those early enough to get ripe in the Red River Valley of the north at Crookston, Minnesota to those late enough to give superior performance in the deep south, all the way from south Texas to Florida. Each maturity area in between requires a different group of hybrids in order to produce the maximum yield of high quality corn on standing stalks.

One of the great changes that has come about in corn production since 1937 is the method of harvesting. In the 1930's practically all the corn in the Corn Belt was harvested by hand. Mechanical pickers had been tried, but without great success because so often open pollinated corn was lodged and either leaning badly or on the ground so the mechanical equipment could not harvest it satisfactorily. With the superior standing ability of hybrid corn, mechanical pickers soon came into very general use, and at the present time it is news worthy to find any corn that is harvested by hand in the central Corn Belt.

Mason City Implement Co.

MASON CITY, ILLINOIS

21 Years of Sales and Service in same location.

John Deere

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and

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OPTOMETRISTS

510 BROADWAY PHONE 1062

LINCOLN, ILLINOIS

Unloading Ear Corn at Funk's During the Harvest Season

Of course, the fundamental reason why hybrid corn has been so universally accepted is its capacity to yield substantially more than the best native open pollinated varieties. Various estimates have been given, but a 30 per cent increase in yield is undoubtedly conservative. Many farmers are actually getting 50 per cent to 100 per cent greater yields than they did when planting open-pollinated corn. Part of this increased yield can be traced to better soil improvement and fertility practices. Hybrid corn, as it has been developed by Funk Bros Seed Co., has the capacity to use this increased fertility and convert it into profitable corn crops. One reason that the fertilization of open-pollinated corn was seldom practical was that it did not produce a sufficient yield increase to be profitable.

Still another great contribution of FUNK'S G-HYBRID has been the improvement in the quality of corn. Some years a substantial percentage of open pollinated corn had to be discarded because it was so badly rotted that it had no feeding value and was not salable on the market. Hybrid corn shows much less damage from disease because it has been possible to breed resistance to important corn diseases into the hybrids we now use. In addition, resistance to insects has become an important characteristic of hybrid corn. This does not mean that insects like chinch bugs and corn borers cannot damage modern hybrid corn, but it does mean that the damage is much less than was true with open-pollinated corn.

Another characteristic which has been bred into hybrid corn, which has been very important the last few years, is drouth resistance. Modern hybrids which have the capacity to do well under favorable conditions also have resistance to drouth which is much superior to that found in older types of corn.

Corn breeding has become a science that has made a tremendous contribution to our economy and its producing capacity has released a tremendous acreage for other valuable crops. For example; in the early 1930's we planted a total of 110,000,000 acres of corn. In 1956 we had less than 80,000,000 acres of corn, and, while we cannot be sure at this time, it appears that the acreage will be further reduced in 1957. These acres released from corn production have gone to many other crops such as sorghum, soybeans, and in some cases, oats and barley.

This story has never been fully told, but there is substantial evidence that hybrid corn, in its great producing capacity, made it possible for our people to be

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of

CECIL PALMER'S

Compliments

of

Arlee Theatre

ART, LEAH and CHARLEEN

STRUCK

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RIGDON'S TAVERN

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MASON CITY, ILLINOIS

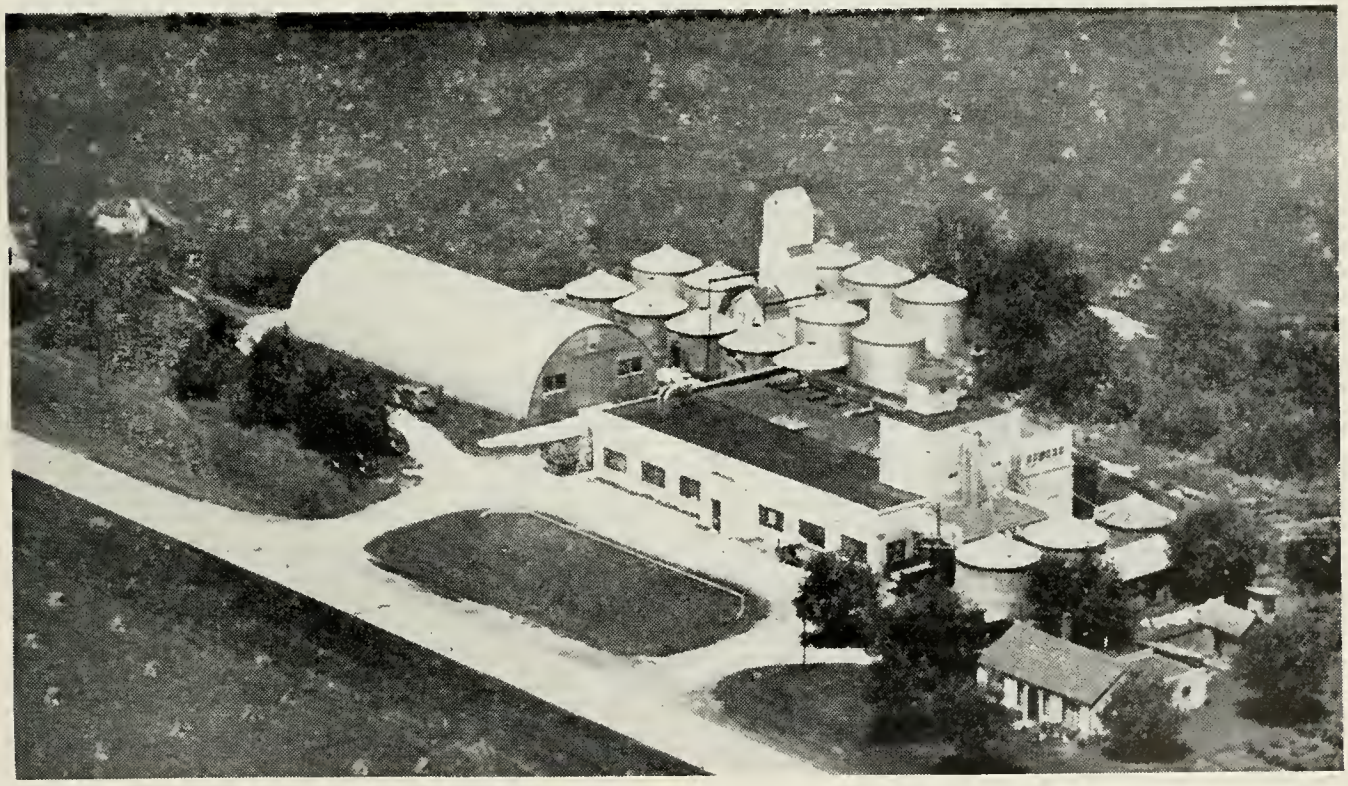
well fed during the war period in spite of the fact that tremendous quantities of food materials were shipped overseas. While at the moment we have the problem of having a little too much corn, it is clearly evident that, with our expanding population and our decrease in available crop acres, we will need to continue to improve corn through adequate breeding procedures as well as continuing to use the best soil fertility practices. Our surplus corn at the present time is only enough to take care of our requirement for a few months if, for any reason, we fail to produce a crop.

New breeding projects are constantly under study by Funk Bros. Seed Co. These projects include studies designed to change the chemical composition of the corn kernel to make it more valuable for special purposes, increased resistance to insects such as corn borers, and resistance to stalk rot diseases which occasionally give some trouble. All of these good characteristics, of course, need to be combined with satisfactory yield of high quality corn and the capacity to do well under a wide range of conditions as Corn Belt weather is notoriously variable. Some years it is too wet . . . some years it is too dry. Some years the temperatures are above normal . . . some years the temperatures are below normal. At the time the corn is planted, these seasonal variations are seldom known, so the best performance under field conditions can only be obtained when the hybrids have the bred-in capacity to do well under all of these varying climatic situations.

Funk Bros. Seed Co.'s operations at Mason City have always included the distribution of field seeds to serve the farmers in the territory and substantial quantities of seed wheat and seed rye are purchased for distribution in other areas. These operations are under the capable direction of Charles Flinspach, who has been employed at Mason City for many years by the organization.

LaFayette Funk, Jr., is in charge of the hybrid corn program as it is now carried out in the Mason City area.

AINSWORTH SEED COMPANY



Ainsworth's Modern Plant — One Mile East of Mason City

The Ainsworth Seed Company, formerly W. T. Ainsworth and Sons, is one of the oldest seed corn firms in the corn belt, established for the sole purpose of producing and processing higher-yielding strains of corn. The W. T. Ainsworth and Sons Company, originator of the term "pure-bred" seed corn, was organized in 1908. In the days of open-pollinated corn it was the second largest seed corn firm in the world. W. T. Ainsworth, founder of the company, realized that selection of seed corn merely by the appearance of an ear of corn was not enough — there must be breeding behind that ear of corn. He practiced selection of open-pollinated varieties year after year, applying the term "pure-bred" to the seed. Associated with W. T. Ainsworth were his three eldest sons, who introduced many new methods in the processing of seed corn. They perfected a method of forcing air by means of large fans through the corn to safely dry it to a suitable moisture content for seed. In these early days Mason City was the seed corn center of the corn belt, and during the early months of the year farmers for miles around would come by train to Mason City to select their seed corn.

W. T. Ainsworth became inactive in the business as he reached middle age. Two of his sons left the firm, and

the third died shortly before the advent of hybrid corn — a product whose breeding was not guesswork but was controlled by inbreeding and hybridization. Shortly before hybrid corn was introduced into Illinois, W. T. Ainsworth interested his grandson, R. C. "Doc" Ainsworth in corn breeding. For six years prior to the establishment of his own business, Doc Ainsworth carried on corn breeding work in Mason and Menard counties. He began inbreeding strains of Ainsworth's Pure Bred Corn, Canterbury, Krug, Leaming, and Ried's Yellow Dent, as well as single crosses between inbreds obtained from the Illinois and Iowa Experiment Stations. During the winters he attended the University of Illinois, worked in Bloomington for Funk Brothers Seed Company, worked for the Iowa Crop Improvement Association shucking out yield test-plots throughout the state, studied at Ames under Dr. Sprague and Dr. Lindstrom, Iowa State's famous corn breeders, and received a Master's Degree in Agronomy from the University of Illinois under the direction of Dr. Woodworth, one of the corn belt's very finest corn breeders. Through a program of rigid selection and careful testing over a period of many years, a group of rugged, time-tested hybrids has been developed.

The new Ainsworth Seed Company, located one mile east of Mason City on Route 10, was begun in 1941 and went into operation on February 1, 1942, receiving its first crop of hybrid seed corn that fall. It consists of a large processing plant including bulk storage bins with a total capacity of over 50,000 bushels and a warehouse forty feet by one-hundred forty feet in dimension. The drying, processing, and grading equipment is the most modern that can be obtained. All of the shelling, cleaning and grading equipment is on the ground floor of the plant, provision having been made for processing all kinds of farm seeds such as corn, soybeans, wheat and oats. The most outstanding innovation is the arrangement of the ear corn drying bins along the outside wall of the plant. There are five bins, all of which are filled from the outside by means of a power-driven conveyor, and these bins are operated in groups of two for drying corn. The members of the first Ainsworth Seed Company were pioneers in the use of heated forced air for drying seed corn. Now almost all companies are using this method. A large oil-fired burner is used to heat the air that is forced through the bins of corn by a mammoth electrically operated fan. Electric controls are used which automatically keep the temperature at 110° — the ideal heat for drying corn. An electric eye automatically cuts off the oil flow in case the fire fails for any reason.

In 1955 Ainsworth Seed Company completed a new seed research building, located directly across the highway from their processing plant. Here they can accurately analyze, germinate and catalog each lot of seed handled to be certain it meets the rigid standards required. Research work is also conducted in their corn nursery at Homestead, Florida, where, during the winter, all the hybrids sold are grown and observed.

Ainsworth Seed Company produces all of their own hybrid seed corn on farms owned and operated by themselves. Each year many new hybrids are produced, and these are tested in an extensive corn-testing program. Only the best hybrids are chosen for production on a commercial scale. Built on a strong foundation of three generations of corn breeding, they offer the popularly known Ainsworth "X-Brand" Hybrids, listed as "highest yielding" in official corn test bulletins published by the University of Illinois.

MASON CITY'S ICE MAKING INDUSTRY

In 1919 - 1920 W. Howard Ainsworth built an ice manufacturing plant at 109 South Mason Street (the present location of the Mason City Implement Co.) and the operation of this plant was continued for five years. Ice was sold from this plant to nearby towns and also distributed locally in those day of the old-fashioned Ice Box. In the meantime The City Ice and Fuel Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio had constructed a $500,000 ice manufacturing plant in 1923 on the east side of the Chicago and Alton R.R. right-of-way about a quarter of a mile south of town. Ainsworth was successful in arranging an agreement whereby he became the local distributor of ice for the new plant under a very favorable contract. Following this he sold his ice making equipment to his brother Maynard who moved it to Bloomington.

The City Ice and Fuel Company's business was to service the refrigerator cars on the Alton Line. During the hot weather hundreds of cars would be serviced by the plant crew that oftentimes numbered up to fifty men in the peak season. This industry was an excellent source of well-paid employment to many Mason City men. The regular crew had year around employment which was something new for Mason City workers. However, methods of refrigeration improved and gradually the volume of business fell off at the Mason City plant until it was decided to discontinue the manufacture of ice here. The plant was closed in 1942 and the machinery sold to a company making ice in Mexico.

During the four or five years before the large building was sold to its present owners the place had several temporary tenants who used it for various purposes ranging from the wartime storage of hemp for the government to a receiving station for dead farm livestock. The place was finally purchased by Faber Industries, Inc., of Peoria, Illinois in 1949.

MASON CITY'S FASTEST GROWING INDUSTRY

Following its purchase of the old City Ice and Fuel Co. building, the Faber Co. installed close to $250,000 worth of equipment for the purpose of grinding, screening; blending and bagging meat and bone scraps and tankage. The new industry has undergone a steady growth and now employes 30 people.

Meat and bone scraps are the principal source of animal protein in dog and poultry feeds. They are also used to some extent in cattle and swine rations. Tankage is used almost exclusively in swine rations. The material used to make the above products comes from many sources and is brought by Faber Industries from

Faber Industries, Inc., At South Edge of City

most of the Eastern and Southern sections of the United States.

The difference between meat and bone scraps and tankage is the way the material is cooked. Meat and bone scraps are "dry rendered" which means that they are cooked in their own fat and moisture, much the same as cooking meat in a pressure cooker at home. This produces a product light brown in color. Tankage is cooked the "wet rendered" way which means it is cooked in water and therefore has a very dark color. Meat and bone scraps and tankage are bought on the unit of protein basis. Meat and bone scraps are usually sold containing 50 percent protein whereas tankage is sold containing 60 percent protein.

The above two products are made from meat and bone scraps from butcher shops, locker plants, packing houses and institutional scraps. Fallen animals are also a principal source of meat and bone scraps as well as tankage. This material is cooked and at this stage it contains around 34 to 38 percent grease. Faber Extraction Co. in Mason City buys over a million and a half pounds of this type material each month. It is processed by the Faber Extraction Co. which was built in 1955-56 south of the Faber Industries plant. The Faber Extraction Co. extracts the grease from the scrap down to 2 to 4 percent. They do this by the azeo-extraction method using heptane as a solvent. It is the only plant in the world extracting meat scrap by this method. From the extraction plant the scrap is cooled and cured in a curing building and from there it is taken to the mill to be ground, screened, blended and shipped out either in bags or bulk to all parts of the mid-west by truck and rail.

The Faber Industries Mill not only buys the extracted material from the Faber Extraction Co. but they buy "cracklings" which is the scrap cooked and pressed down to 10 to 12 percent grease. They buy over 1000 tons of these cracklings each month from all over the Eastern and Southern parts of the United States. These cracklings are ground and processed in the same manner as the extracted meat scrap.

The grease from the meat scrap is sold to feed manufacturers to be put in feed as well as the soap producers and chemical houses. Grease from the plant in Mason City has been shipped to all parts of the world.

In the last few months Faber Formulated Feed Co. has taken over one room of the old ice house and has installed some feed manufacturing equipment. This company is planning further expansion in the near future. They are now producing a Nu-Pro-Ces All-Purpose Mineral, a Nu-Pro-Ces Hog Mineral, and a Faber All-Purpose Mineral. These three minerals as well as Nu-Pro-Ces Meat Scraps and Tankage can be bought at most Feed Stores in central Illinois.

The management of the plant in Mason City consists of Mr. Ben Nafziger, office manager; Mr. Eugene Giehl, Chief Chemist; Mr. Roy Bishoff, superintendent of the Mill; Mr. David Broadhurst, superintendent of the extraction plant; Mr. Donald Ward, assistant superintendent of extraction plant; and Dr. Fred Bisplinghoff, general manager.

Communting to Work

The prosperity of Mason City has been augmented by the trend to work in industrial centers. A conservative estimate would be that at least 200 families here get their livelihood from out-of-town employment. The principal employer of Mason City people is The Caterpillar Tractor Co. of East Peoria. Many other Mason Citians work in the LeToureau-Westinghouse Plant in Peoria, the Corn Products plant in Pekin, the Keystone Wire Co. in Bartonville, and in several of the industries in Lincoln and in Springfield. An increasing number of people also are employed by the State in Springfield. This ability to commute to work 30 or 40 miles has been made possible by the pavements that intersect at Mason City connecting our town to the industrial centers. The trend became noticeable well before World War II and is now firmly established.

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JOHN M. DODSON MARY K. MANGOLD

Fraternal and Social Organizations

MASON CITY LODGE NO. 403
ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

Mason City Lodge No. 403 A. F. and A. M. was organized January 5, 1864 with the following present: J. Ambrose, Grand Master, P. T.; Q. Orendorff, Grand Master, P. T.; W. T. Paxton, Senior Warden; C. Hume, Junior Warden; C. H. Grant, Secretary; W. Hall, Treasurer; B. A. Rosebrough, Senior Deacon; J. L. Orendorff, Junior Deacon and Q. Orendorff, Tyler.

At this meeting W. A. Paxton was installed Worshipful Master; J. Ambrose, Senior Warden and C. Hume, Junior Warden. The newly appointed Master then appointed W. Hall, Treasurer; C. H. Grant, Secretary; B. A. Rosebrough, Senior Deacon; J. L. Orendorff, Junior Deacon and Q. Orendorff, Tyler.

The By-Laws for the Lodge were written and adopted at this meeting. The place of this meeting was in the second story of a building (since torn down) located at the corner of West Elm and South Main Streets where Moslander's Shell Service Station is now located.

Charter members of the lodge were J. S. Walker, C. H. Grant, B. A. Rosebrough, J. L. Orendorff, Henry Keefer, Prentis Orendorff, John Wolburn, A. S. Jackson, Joseph Statler, J. A. Walker, D. W. Riner, besides the officials named above.

Another Masonic Lodge was organized on October 5, 1869, called Anchor Lodge No. 615. This lodge was consolidated with Mason City Lodge No. 403 in 1873.

Mason City Lodge No. 403 moved into the third story of the Stone building (later known as the Cargill building and now owned and occupied by Poppen's Market) at 112 South Main Street in 1871.

The corner, now occupied by Burnhams D-X Service Station, formerly the Lud Davis Livery Barn, was purchased by the Masons in 1915 with the intention of sometime building on that corner. This site was later sold and the H. C. Cargill building, 131 South Main Street, was bought in 1924. The upper rooms of this building were completly remodeled into one of the finest lodge homes in this vicinity. The new lodge rooms were finished and occupied in October, 1924.

There are now 195 members of Mason City Lodge No. 403 A. F. and A. M. Officers are: Glen Young, Worshipful Master, Robert Pugh, Senior Warden; Delmar Becker, Junior Warden; Leonard Thomas, Treasurer; Cecil Lowe, Secretary; Ben Nafziger, Chaplain; Henry Kendall, Senior Deacon; Samuel Lynch, Junior Deacon; Max Conrad, Senior Steward; George Doggett, Junior Steward; James Wasilewski, Marshal and William McAtee, Tyler.

MADELINE CHAPTER NO. 396
Order of the Eastern Star of Illinois

The idea of instituting a Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star was presented at a public installation of officers of Mason City Lodge, No. 403 A.F. & A.M. in January, 1898 by W. B. Carlock of Bloomington. Mr. Carlock was Worthy Grand Patron of the Order at that time and had come to the installation with the express purpose of explaining the importance of Eastern Star work.

The Masonic Hall was then located on the third floor of the Cargill building on the west side of Main street. This third story had, in fact, been built especially for the Masons' meeting place. To us it seems quite unusual for a man to have allowed an organization to build an addition atop his building, but we are told that Mason City's three-story buildings are here because of that custom.

The ladies who attended that public installation of officers in 1898 remember with smiles the picture the chapter room presented—no decorations were to be seen except the shiny brass cuspidors ranged between the chairs on either side of the long room. These homely conveniences soon vanished after the Eastern Star chapter was organized; but for a while the cuspidors were simply lined up outside a window on the ladies' nights.

After Worthy Grand Patron Carlock's talk on the Order of the Eastern Star, a number of the people present showed a desire to try to institute a chapter here, and a preliminary meeting was held soon at the Masonic Hall, called by Mr. Charles Walsh. The Worthy Grand Patron attended this meeting also and gave suggestions .

Instituted February 10, 1898

The twenty-four prospective Eastern Stars met together on February 10,1898 and the Worthy Grand Patron instituted the chapter. It came into being with twenty charter members and four candidates to be initiated into the Order. The Worthy Grand Matron granted a special dispensation for the chapter to receive and ballot on the four petitions at this first meeting, namely Miss Maud Miller, William I. Kincaid, Daniel Parr and G. W. Tyler. These candidates received the initiatory degrees from Worthy Grand Patron Carlock assisted by members of Delavan Chapter No. 58 of Delavan, Illinois, and Past Grand Marshal, Frances M. Hall of Hesperia Chapter, No. 137 of Havana, Illinois. Delavan Chapter has always been considered the Mother Chapter.

The Name "Madeline"

The Chapter was named "Madeline" after the granddaughter of Worthy Grand Patron Carlock.

Into the Masonic Temple in 1924

In October, 1924, the present Masonic Temple was completed, and occupied. This new biulding with its spacious chapter room and lounge completely carpeted and furnished, a large dining hall and convenient kitchen was a joy to every member.

Charter members of Madeline Chapter were Mary Bird, Grace M. Badger, Olive E. Green, Sarah A. Freeman, Bessie L. Kincaid, Edith A. Culp, Bessie Culp, Emma Bird, Anna E. Kincaid, Marietta Walsh, Katie Mundt, Plondenia Mundt, Virgie E. Walsh, DeEtta Foster, Lillian E. Tyler, C. E. Freeman, J. S. Culp, C. E. Walsh, W. S. Badger and J. B. Green.

The Chapter's instructress is Berenice Raisch, Springfield, a member of Madeline, who has been a Grand Lecturer for 30 years.

Madeline Chapter now has a membership of 237

Officers for 1957

Worthy Matron, Mayme Thomas; Worthy Patron, Leonard Thomas; Associate Matron, Lucile McNeil; As-

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sociate Patron, Robert McNeil; Secretary, Carl D. Tomlin; Treasurer, Ruth Lowe; Conductress, Geraldine Jennings; Associate Conductress, Betty Doyle; Chaplain, Marie Taylor; Marshal, Minnetta Ainsworth; Organist, Theresa Tongate; Adah, Mildred Yardley; Ruth, Marian Tomlin; Esther, Frances Fink; Martha, Alta Wooldridge; Electa, Beverly Wasilewski; Warder, T. P. Jennings; Sentinel, Cecil Lowe; Color Bearer, Trina Lowe.

MASON CITY WOMAN'S CLUB

Although not as old as the city itself, Mason City Woman's Club has for the last half century played an important role in the development of Mason City. In going back over the minutes of each club year, one cannot help but have the greatest admiration for the women who did so much to make this community a better place to live and to raise their families.

It was in 1904 that the Woman's Club came into existence. Mrs. J. H. Dearborn was the first president and led her club through the difficult formative period. The meetings were then held in the homes and there were many spirited debates as to whether people who had no musical inducements such as pianos, should be allowed the priviledge of entertaining the Woman's Club. One of the most active committees was the excuse committee. Each member must submit an acceptable excuse for her absence at a meeting or pay a fine.

One of the first civic projects undertaken by the newly formed club was the establishment of a railroad park and a great deal of time and effort was put forth to make this park a thing of beauty. Flowers, vines and shrubs were set out in this plot and it was kept mowed for years afterward.

Perhaps the act that brought delight to the greatest number of people was the starting of the Public Library. A. D. Ovens gave the women his library of 100 books and Mrs. Dearborn gave a case with a set of books. Other books were given but not all of them proved useable. Too often people gave books that neither they nor anyone else would want such as "Eating Habits of the Head-Hunters" and an etiquette book dated 1809 which was a big help in the modern age of 1900. The next few years it required most of the effort of the club to keep the library running.

The first gavel was given to the club by Mrs. Lottie Warnock in 1908.

1911-'12-'13 were the years that Mrs. Harvey Coats served as President of the Woman's Club. Some of the highlights of her term of office were printing cook books, an art exhibit and a permanent place to have the meetings. The K. of P. club rooms were chosen for the place of meeting. There were talks on landscape architecture showing how interested these women were in their community.

During the presidency of Mrs. Lois Sutton a new piano was purchased for the club rooms, a new constitution was drawn up and there were many debates on the sufferage of women. Club members visited school in an effort to interest the school children in building bird houses and planting gardens. The prize for the best garden was to be an automobile ride as most children had never ridden in a car and it was the most thrilling prize possible. The services of a school nurse were also secured.

In 1917-'18 Mrs. W. G. Huse was the president and it was at this time that a proposition for a hard road was endorsed by the club and sent to the State Senate and House. The Literature department came into being when a reading circle was formed.

Many people will recall the rest room which was located in the north side of the building that has now been remodeled into the home of Mr. and Mrs. Clyde VanVelzer. Mrs. Walter Stone was president at this time. Not only were the facilities of the rest room appreciated by people passing through town but it became quite a spot in which to stop and visit with fellow citizens when downtown shopping.

Mrs. J. S. Culp was president when it was decided to raise $30.00 needed to oil the road from the city limits to the cemetery. This was a huge joke to the men of the community but undaunted, the women continued their efforts to raise the money and had the road oiled. The Woman's Club voted about this time to set up a scholarship loan for deserving students.

In 1927 the Woman's Club decided to have a Better Baby Conference at the County Fair. Mrs. Carrie Ainsworth was to be in charge of this conference.

During the time Mrs. Stella Rogier was president, the club did much for health projects. They were — Red Cross Drive, Anti-Diphtheria Campaign, $5 to Chicago Woman's Shelter, $25 to War Veterans Hospital at Dwight, Red Cross Health Bond, talks on prevention of blindness,

Fire Destroys Historic Entertainment Spot

The Legion Hall, gutted by fire on March 22, 1928, is a truly historic spot. Known as the LaForge Hall in the early days, it's stage was trod by many of the top entertainers of the time who dubbed Mason City as the "biggest little show town in the state." Mason City was a favorite stop-over for stage people enroute from Chicago to St. Louis. During that time Lipman Frank managed the theatre in addition to his stores. The L. Frank Opera House supplied the community with entertainment that was on a par with that appearing in the big cities.

a pre-school clinic, first aid demonstration, a talk by Cleanliness Institute of New York and a petition for the continuation of county nurse. Surely Mason City was a healthier place to live. The triangle north of town was planted in grass about this time and there were flower beds to make it an attractive entrance to Mason City. For years the Woman's Club kept up this beauty spot.

The club celebrated its 25th anniversary during the term of Mrs. J. Howard Stone. The charter members were honored at the fall luncheon. The garden department was organized and for years this department had monthly meetings. $25.00 was given to the High School P. T. A. for furnishing the Girl's Rest Room and a gift was also given to the two grade schools for playground equipment.

The banks of Mason City were closed while Mrs. Eldred Close was president and she appointed a committee to assist the business people in restoring confidence in banks.

In 1933 when Mrs. J. B. Abbott was president, a letter was sent to the P.T.A. and Rotary Club regarding a community playground. The club also cooperated with Mr. Ray Graham on the organization of the Mason City Juvenile Council, participated in a stunt show for the benefit of the Athletic Association, organized a Mother's Study Group and held a contest on garden planning. The contest was won by Mrs. R. D. Culp.

Mrs. Paul Vincent met with Mrs. Ray Graham immediately upon becoming president and they discussed the merits of The Girl Scouts and how it could be organized. The committee that she appointed to head this new organization was Julia Stone, Evelyn Rogier, Mildred Stith and Margaret Mathers. Twenty-seven years later the Woman's Club still sponsor the Girl Scouts and entertain them once each year. The dues were raised from $1 to $2 at this time and the Woman's Club gave blankets, clothes and money for flood relief.

It was in 1927 that the American Home Department was organized and has steadily grown until now it is too large for the homes of the community.

In order to become closer to the community Mrs. Helen Lager suggested that the Woman's Club entertain other local groups. This proved a very successful idea and was carried on for a number of years afterward. The club also cooperated in the community Christmas toy distribution in 1937 and donated to the Boy Scouts to help them in building their camp.

During the years that Mrs. Herman Busch and Mrs. J. W. Ainsworth were presidents the war was going on and all efforts were made toward aiding the war effort in any way possible. Members rolled bandages, learned to make over old clothes and many other conservation measures.

Most of you will recall the TARC Club. Many of you enjoyed hours there as teen-agers and many of you will remember hours of chaperoning. The Woman's Club under Mrs. T. K. Wible's leadership agreed to part-time supervision of this club for our youngsters. The Children's Home at Teheran was still active during this period and the club held a benefit card party for this worthy project. A Christmas party was also planned with each member bringing a gift for a child. Another activity was the placing of containers in all business houses for donations to be used for food packages to boys in overseas prison camps. Mrs. George Brinner and Mrs. Frank Rissinger headed this committee. We also made scrap books and candy for boys in hospitals.

In 1945-'46 Mrs. Howard Ainsworth served her club and during this time $90 was collected and used to buy blackboards for the children in the home at Teheran. Plans for a Girl Scout Troop became an actuality and Mrs. Ainsworth served many years as leader of this troop.

Stanley Davis was sent to Egyptian Music Camp during the time Mrs. W. G. Burnsmier was president of the Woman's Club. For the first time the club entertained the mothers of the Girl Scouts and have continued this custom for the past ten years.

Mrs. L. E. Mathers became President in 1949 and it was during her administration that we entertained the district. This proved to be very successful and one of the largest ever undertaken. A sextette was organized and sang at many affairs for the next few years.

Under the leadership of Mrs. Fred Brinner the club gave $100 to the scholarship fund to be started by the deacon's committee of the Presbyterian Church. The club also contributed to the fund for the Senior trip that year. When the $100 was later returned it was given to the Girl Scouts in order that they might become part of the Land of Lincoln Council and enjoy the privileges of camping at Camp Widjiwagan and the various day camps.

Mrs. Allece Martin suggested that Mason City be one of the clubs to send cookies to The Trail Rangers, a home for boys at Marquette Park and the club has followed this procedure for the past four years, sending over forty dozen this last year. The club had the honor of having one of its members chosen as District President, Mrs. W. G. Burnsmier, and Mrs. H. J. Satorius as Secretary of the District. The Club also celebrated its fiftieth anniversary during Mrs. Martin's term of office. Each member was asked to contribute 50 cents to the band uniform fund and quite a sum was turned over to that committee of the P.T.A.

Mental Health has become an increasingly important subject and Mrs. Robert McNeil chose this for her pet project during the two years she was president. Over 400 old, but wearable, hats, a huge box of purses, piles of magazines and other articles were taken to the State Hospital at Jacksonville.

Besides the above-mentioned projects which the Woman's Club has either sponsored or to which it has contributed, the club has also donated to fourteen state projects each year. The amount the club contributes is very small but when it is multiplied by the thousands of clubs over the state then the amount is very worthwhile. For this reason the club feels that belonging to the General Federation of Woman's Clubs is very important and necessary.

As Mason City starts its second century, the Woman's Club will continue to give aid where it is needed as well as offer a cultural program for the women of this community. Mrs. Harold Wm. Mangold has been elected president for the next two years and the Mason City Woman's Club will go forward under her leadership.

The officers for the past year were: Mrs. Robert McNeil, president; Mrs. Clarence Reuss, vice-president; Mrs. Gene Blessman, secretary; Mrs. N. F. Shipper, treasurer; Mrs. J. Howard Stone, Mrs. L. E. Mathers and Mrs. Horace Whitney, board of directors.

LOCAL ODD FELLOWS LODGE REACHES NINETY - FIRST YEAR

Mason City Lodge Number 337, I.O.O.F. will be 91 years old on September 6, 1957.

The lodge was instituted in the year 1866 by Samuel Willard, Grand Secretary and J. R. Scroggs, Grand Master. Charter members were Marcellus C. Phinney, N. G.; John Smith, secretary; Louis C. Myers, Andrew McElheny and H. W. Butler.

This was reported in the first issue of Mason City's first newspaper "The Times" of December 25, 1866. Continuing information was that the lodge met every Thursday evening in the Masonic Hall over Kincaid and Bradley Drug Store.

The Odd Fellows new "Daylight Store Building" with lodge hall above was built in 1914 by Howard Wharram, contractor. The L. Frank Clothing Store occupied the first floor as it does today.

For years the Odd Fellows, Rebekahs, Woodmen and Royal Neighbors have held their regular meeting in the hall interspersed with social functions and gathering which many folks will never forget.

Newly installed officers are: Nelson J. Oller, Noble Grand; Carol L. Lowe, Vice Grand; Henry C. Zieglowsky, Secretary; Roy McDaniel, Financial Secretary; D. Clyde Lowe, Treasurer; Louis Herman, Past Grand; Duane C. Lowe, Lodge Deputy; Carl Wilcoxson, Warden; Oscar Brown, Conductor; Tom Williams, Inside Guardian; Harrison Purvis, R. S. to N. G.; Louis Herman, L. S. to N. G.; Howard Shelton, R. S. to V. G.; Duane C. Lowe, L. S. to V. G. and Jimmy Blessman, Chaplain.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF REBEKAH LODGE NUMBER 131

November 20, 1957 will be the fifty-fifth anniversary of Sweet Home Rebekah Lodge Number 131 at Mason City, Illinois. Charter members were Clara Falkner Louise Dorrell, Lydia Robins, Nellie Anderson, Etta Meeker, Bird Pierce, S. E. Bolman, Mary Bollinger and Maud Horn.

Sweet Home Rebekah Lodge meets in the I.O.O.F. Hall and the membership is now forty-nine. The 1957 officers are: Marcene Hines, Noble Grand; Ora Thieland, Vice Grand; Ethel Williams, Deputy and Recording Secretary; Mary Bates, Financial Secretary; Stella Bond, Treasurer and Reporter; Shirley Zessin, Right Supporter to the Noble Grand; Minnie Schmidt, Left Supporter to the Noble Grand; Dotty Zieglowsky, Warden; Doris Lowe, Conductor; Mary Rafferty, Outside Guardian; Margaret Lynch, Inside Guardian; Trina Lowe, Chaplain; Lois Brown, Musician; Stella McDaniel, Right Supporter to the Vice Grand; Leota Kastendick, Left Supporter to the Vice Grand; and Mae Lowe, Jr. Past Noble Grand.

It was thirty years after the formation of the first Odd Fellows Lodge that is was proposed to form a similar organization for women. The purpose of the proposed Rebekah Lodge was to further the social side of life, to help nurse the sick and especially to help care for the Homes of Odd Fellows. The Odd Fellows and Rebekahs support two homes in Illinois — The Old Folks Home at Mattoon and the Children's Home at Lincoln.

From the Rebekah Lodge there is a social group, the Past Noble Grands Club. Only members who have been Past Noble Grands are eligible to belong. This club was organized November 16, 1937 at the home of Mrs. Ed L. Corson with fifteen members. There are now twenty-two in the club. Officers this year are, Gertrude Cease, president; Shirley Zessin, vice-president; Ethel Williams, secretary and Minnie Schmidt, treasurer.

MODERN WOODMEN

Weaver Camp No. 191, Modern Woodmen of America, was organized in 1883 by Captain W. H. Weaver of Petersburg, Ill. The camp met for years in the Odd Fellows Hall but has been inactive for the past two years. There are now 56 members of Weaver Camp. Cecil Fore is acting secretary for the camp.

ROYAL NEIGHBORS

Mason City Royal Neighbors Lodge was founded in 1898 with 42 charter members, namely: Eva Pottorf, Wm. Theobald, Wm. Patterson, C. M. Haughey, J. S. Culp, John W. Surface, T. N. Sutton, Dr. C. W. Cargill, C. W. Wilson, Mollie Hess, Edith Culp, Ella Heckman, Minerva Surface, Jennie Sutton, K. V. Sikes, Mattie Butler, Charles Hess, John Mowery, Harry Cargill, Minetta Earhart, Mary Lucas, Plondina Mundt, Katie Mundt, Mrs. A. B. Chester, Ora Sikes, Mae Hess, Lizzie Ewers, Amy Mehan, W. A. Mehan, Mat Butler, Fred Hess, H. J. Blessman, Sarah Keller, Susie Houchin, Fannie Titus, Eliza C. Romine, Allie Benscoter, Maggie Titus and Carrie Whitney.

The lodge met for years in the old K. P. building, now owned by James Peters, 138 East Chestnut Street, and then in the Odd Fellows building.

There are now 182 members of this fraternal-benefit society. Present officers are: Oracle, Stella Bond; Past Oracle, Anna Fletcher; Vice Oracle Leota Kastendick; Recorder, Arlene Schladen; Receiver, Lertie Baumgardner; Chancellor, Olive Lynn; Marshal, Helen Blessman; Assistant Marshal, Kathleen Conrad; Inner Sentinel, Mary Bates; Outer Sentinel, Wincie Hubbard; Musician, Hazel LeSourd; Flag Bearer, Flora Hill.

THE EUTERPEAN SOCIETY

On February 15, 1888, a select group of fourteen of Mason City's young ladies met at the home of Miss Nellie Stewart with the object of forming a musical club which they named the "Merry Musical Maids." Shortly after this group was organized the name was changed to "The Euterpean Society" after the mythological goddess of music Euterpe. Since those early days the Euterpeans have supplied much of the talent at special musical occasions in Mason City.

Membership is limited to ladies with interest or talent in music. The society has regular monthly meetings at which music in its various forms is studied. At these meeting the members have a most pleasant time presenting vocal and instrumental numbers and visiting, besides the more serious study of music.

The Euterpean Society has, through the years, been a source of talent for Mason City and a source of great pleasure to its members in the showing of their talent.

The society has a membership of 32. Officers for 1956-1957 are, Emilie Herman, president; Carolee Byerly, vice-president; Mary Nafziger, secretary and Mardelle List, treasurer. Those who will take office in September are, Mrs. Ted Behrends, president; Mrs. Talmage Tongate, vice president; Mrs. Weldon Renken, secretary and Mrs. H. G. Beck, treasurer.

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Mason City, Illinois

In February 1919 General Pershing sent 20 Officers, from 20 different organizations stationed in Europe to Paris to discuss ways of improving morale of the men stationed there with time on their hands. On Febraury 16th after taking care of the business for which they had been sent, Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., asked his fellow officers to be his guests at a dinner to be held at the Allied Officers' Club at Rue Fauborg St. Honore, Paris, France. They all attended the dinner and at the conclusion of dinner Col. Roosevelt asked them what they thought about forming an association of American Veterans of the Great War. All reacted favorably, so the discussion went on into the night and they decided that there should be two meetings held, one in France and the other in the United States for those who had not served overseas.

It was decided that the France caucus would be held in Paris in March, 1919, and Bennett Champ Clark was named chairman. This move stopped any thoughts of the organization being a political one because Bennett Champ Clark was the son of Champ Clark, who was the then Speaker of the House of Representatives in the United States and next to President Woodrow Wilson he was probably the best known Democrat in the United States, so with Lt. Col. Roosevelt being a Republican and Bennett Champ Clark a Democrat it became a non-partisan organization even before it was formed.

At the Paris Caucus it was decided to meet again in St. Louis in May.

The St. Louis meeting was called to order on the afternoon of May 8, 1919 with 1,100 delegates present. At this meeting there was talk of fighting communism and the delegates decided that this was a must. Fighting communism was decided upon before even the name of the organization was decided. Down through the years The American Legion has continued their fight until today the Communist consider The American Legion as their No. 1 enemy in the United States.

At the St. Louis meeting it was decided that the organization would call itself The American Legion. It authorized the setting up of Departments in each State and the forming of local Posts.

It was decided that the First Annual National Convention would be held in Minneapolis in November 1919.

At the St. Louis meeting the Preamble to the Constitution was written.

"For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America,

To maintain law and order,

To foster and perpetuate a one hundred per cent Americanism,

To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the great wars,

To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation,

To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses,

To make right the master of might,

To promote peace and good-will on earth,

To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of Justice, Freedom and Democracy,

To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

On September 16, 1919 The American Legion was incorporated by an Act of Congress. The original Act has been changed several times in order to change the membership requirements until today the following are requirements for membership:

(1) To have been on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States during one of the following periods:

April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918
December 7, 1941 to September 2, 1945
June 25, 1950 to July 27, 1953

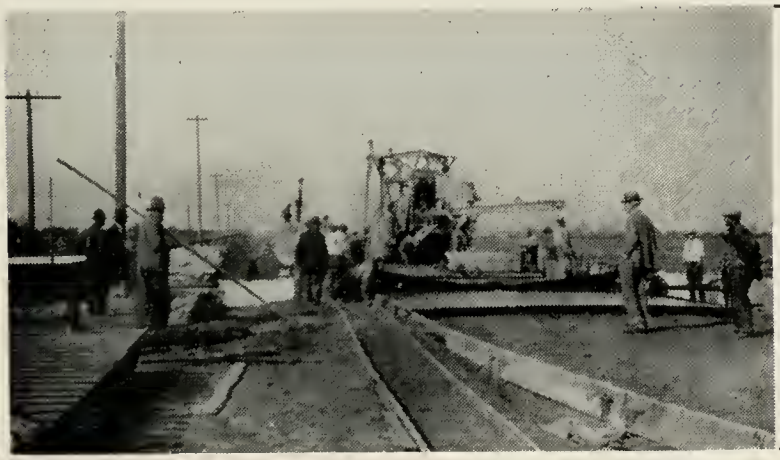
(2) Must have an honorable discharge or continue to serve honorably after the above dates.

(3) Must not have refused to subject himself to military discipline or service on conscientious or political grounds.

(4) Have been a citizen of the United States at time of entry into service with any of our Allies during any of the above mentioned dates and have been honorably discharged from such foreign service.

Under the Federal Charter, The American Legion is prohibited from engaging in partisan politics or the promotion of any political candidates.

In order to form a Post you had to promise to adhere to the principles as set forth in the Constitution and its Preamble. Each Post had a minimum of 15 members with no maximum.



Building The Hard Road

The Hard Roads started a modernizing trend in Mason City. The central figure standing in the road bed (third man from the right) is W. G. Burnsmier, Mayor of Mason City at that time, and chief promoter of getting the routes to intersect at the corner of Main and Chestnut. The topic of debate in 1957 is whether old Route 29 should bypass the town when it is widened and reconditioned.

Organization of Jackson-Keen Post

Sometime before May 1920 a meeting was held in Bolinger's Skating Rink on West Chestnut, where the United States Post Office now stands. All eligible veterans of the area were invited to attend with the idea of forming an American Legion Post. At this meeting Raymond McCreery was selected as temporary Commander.

This group decided to name their Post after James Jackson and Lawrence Keen, two local men who had given their lives while defending their country, thus the name Jackson-Keen. All necessary details were taken care of and an applications was forwarded to the Department of Illinois Headquarters in Bloomington for approval. On September 28, 1920 the Post was presented with its charter and given the number 496.

During the forming of the Post Clark McKnight had been of very great assistance to Raymond McCreery and he was then elected as the first Commander of the Post.

In 1921, George Bracorn, Chairman of the G.A.R. Committee on grave decorations, appeared before the Post and requested that they take over decorating the graves of former service men on Memorial Day in the cemeteries at Mason City, Cherry Grove, Allen's Grove, Big Grove and Swing's Grove. This the Post decided to do and a few years later the cemeteries at Easton and San Jose were added to this list. To this day they are all being decorated by Jackson-Keen Post.

Also in 1921, the Post held the first Decoration Day Services in the Memorial Park, which are still being held.

There are no membership records available for 1920 but in 1921 the Post had 6 members. In 1921 Raymond McCreery was selected as the first delegate this Post ever sent to the Department of Illinois Convention, with Ray Willock being selected as the alternate.

In 1926 the Boy Scouts of America in Mason City were having a hard time of it so the Post gave them a banquet in the Methodist Church basement to help them re-organize. From the start of the organization the American Legion has been very interested in the youth of America believing that the future of our country rests with the youth of today.

On April 12, 1926 the Post voted to rent the Opera House which is their present site.

In 1927 the first Annual Citizenship Banquet was held. At this banquet the Post tries to have a well known speaker who will be enjoyed by everyone in the Community. Through the years Everett McKinley Dirksen, Scott Lucas, several Department Commanders of The American Legion have all spoken at the banquet, as well as other leaders in all walks of life.

About mid-night on March 21, 1928 the Opera House burned with the Post losing all of its belongings and records. They were granted the use of the Knights of Pythias Hall to hold their meetings until such time as they could get back into the Opera House.

In 1931 the Post started giving The American Legion School Awards to the outstanding boy and girl in the eighth grade graduating class in Mason City. These awards are given to the boy and girl chosen by their classmates as the most outstanding in their class, based on the following five items: Honor, Courage, Scholarship, Leadership and Service. They are chosen by secret ballot and none of the pupils know who the winners are until the American Legion representative takes the platform at graduation and announces the names.

A few years later the Post attracted many members from Easton and San Jose and the School Medal Awards program was extended to include the grade schools in both of those towns. All three schools still receive these awards annually.

In 1933 the Post donated and erected the flag pole at the entrance to the Mason City Cemetery.

In 1935, the Department of Illinois held the first Boy's State on the State of Illinois Fairgrounds. Boy's State is for boys of high school age, where a mythical "49th" state is set up, with all offices in city, county and state government being run by boys elected to their respective positions. This program has no equal for teaching the boys the functions of government and government officials. Usually a boy with another year of high school is chosen. In 1933 the Post took part in this program by sponsoring four boys, and since then they have sent from one to four boys every year.

In 1940 the first Homecoming was held. In 1939 a group of merchants, representing the merchants organization approached the Post with the idea of having a Homecoming instead of the local celebrations that the Post had been sponsoring. They stated that they would furnish the money for the free entertainment if the Post would take care of the details. This they agreed to do. Since that time the arrangement has been changed due to the exceptionally high cost of high class entertainment. The Homecoming has been held every year until this year when the Post voted to dispense with it in favor of the Centennial.

In January 1944 a committee was named to meet with committees from the other organizations in the community to see what could be done about erecting some kind of an Honor Roll in memory of those who had answered the call of their country. Eventually this was taken care of and the Honor Roll was erected on the West side of Cackley's Grocery, with Hugh Cackley donating the space for the Honor Roll. In later years the Honor Roll became weatherbeaten and finally had to be removed.

In 1946 The American Legion Band was formed but in 1947 it was decided that the Post would continue to sponsor the band but that it would be called the Mason City Community Band because so many members of the band were not eligible for membership in the American Legion. After two or three years interest in the band dropped and the American Legion Clown Band was formed. On two different occasions the Clown Band took part in the contests held at the State Fairgrounds on Veterans Day, winning a second and a third place in their division on those occasions. The Clown Band participated in many civic functions in Mason City. They also took part in Homecoming celebrations in Elmwood, Mt. Pulaski, Beardstown, Ripley, Browning, Astoria and many others too numerous to mention. They took part in many Legion Conventions in the Third Division and the Twentieth District. Finally the Clown Band lost their trombone and bass horn players and their bass drum player and had to fold up. The band has now been reorganized and has taken a prominent part in Centennial activities.

In 1948 the Post started having what was to have been an Annual Athletic Banquet for the boys who had participated in the athletic program in the local high

school. They brought several outstanding personalities of the sports world into Mason City to speak at these affairs. After a few years it was dropped due to the lack of interest in the community, especially it was noted that many of the people very close to the honored guests did not see fit to attend.

In 1948 a committee was named to investigate the possibility of sponsoring a summer playground for the children of the community. Two trips were made to Tremont by the committee to study the program in operation there, then a meeting of leaders of all the civic organizations in the community was held and the matter was discussed. Before anything could be done, the Rotary Club announced plans for the building of a tennis court, so the Legion Post dropped the playground idea for that year because they were afraid it might interfere with the tennis court program.

Also in 1948, the first Christmas party was held for the children of our area. This party was held in the high school gym with a very large turnout of children. The Clown Band furnished the entertainment and the Post, Auxiliary and Clown Band split the expenses. Since then the Christmas party has been moved to The American Legion Hall because it was so hard to find a date at that time of year that did not conflict with school activity.

In 1949, a drill team was formed that took part in many Legion Conventions and helped with several military funerals.

In 1950 the Post built the dance platform in the Tourist Park. The local merchants furnished part of the money for materials and the Post furnished the labor and the balance of the expense. The platform was laid with the idea that it be the correct size for a tennis court and that the Legion could also use it as a dance platform during their Annual Homecoming. The Rotary Club was to furnish a tennis net and the backstops after the platform was completed. At the same time the stage was built in the park with the idea that it could be used for entertainment during Homecoming as well as for other functions that might take place in the Park. Later the area voted on a Park District and the Park Board took over all of the installations in the Park.

In 1951 the Honor Roll was removed from the side of Cackley's Grocery and all the names were entered in Post files. The Eagle portion of the Honor Roll was repainted by Frank Rissinger and he also painted the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and the Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion. These are now displayed on the west wall of the American Legion Hall.

Jackson-Keen Post has always tried to cooperate with the community on any worth while enterprise. They have donated to most of the charitable organizations, helped finance summer baseball teams, donated flags to the schools on occasion, sponsored Cub Scouts, furnished a meeting place for the Boy Scouts, sponsored youths to several different camps from time to time. They own several pieces of hospital equipment which anyone in the Community is welcome to use, they have furnished colors and color guards for most of the parades held in Mason City, they have assisted many veterans and their dependents.

The Post has grown throughout the years until in 1946 their membership was 246. Currently the membership stands at 234.

Several local Legionnaires have won distinction within The American Legion. Thomas K. Wible and Richard Salesman having served a term as Commander of the 20th District of Illinois, with Myron E. Hanover and Frank Webb serving as Adjutant during their respective terms of office. Edward B. Akin is presently serving as Organization Officer for the Department of Illinois. This is a full time job with Eddie covering about one-half of the State of Illinois for the Department. All of the above mentioned men are Past Commanders of Jackson-Keen Post. There has been several members of this Post who have represented the 20th District as duly elected delegates to the National Convention.

Don List was elected to the position of Commander but failed to take office because he moved to Iowa before installation. The commanders who served the Post are as follows:

1920 Raymond McCreery, temp. cmdr.
1920 Clark W. McKnight
1921 Carl Reeder
1922 Fred Pugh
1923 Elmer Abbott
1924 Clark W. McKnight
1925 Howard Stone
1926 John Scarcliff
1927 John Scarcliff
1928 John Scarcliff
1928-1929 John Scarcliff
1929-1930 William F. Zimmerman
1930-1931 Raymond McCreery
1931-1932 Ray Graham
1932-1933 Robert E. Lee
1933-1934 Robert E. Lee
1934-1935 John Pottorf
1935-1936 Guy Hernan
1936-1937 Thomas K. Wible
1937-1938 Clark P. Webb
1938-1939 Myron Hanover
1939-1940 Myron Hanover
1940-1941 Carl A. Dodson
1941-1942 Fred Cargill
1942-1943 Arthur Lykins
1943-1944 Charles Sommers
1944-1945 William Velde
1945-1946 Fred Brinner
1946-1947 Harry Houseworth
1947-1948 George McBride
1948-1949 Frank Webb
1949-1950 Raymond Beard
1950-1951 Edward Akin
1951-1952 Dick Salesman
1952-1953 Kenneth Young
1953-1954 Stanley Wilkinson
1954-1955 James Biggs
1955-1956 Lee Cutright
1956-1957 Robert Kirby
1957- Kenneth Hanover

THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

The American Legion Auxliary was organized and held their first meeting at the Methodist Church, Mason City, Illinois, on April 20, 1926. The following members were elected to serve for one year: Ethel Surface, president; Helen Zimmerman, vice-president; Mildred Yardley, second vice-president; Winnie McEntire, treasurer; Dora Pottorf, secretary; Cora Yardley, historian; Ollie Ben-

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scoter, chaplain; Emily McKinght, sergeant-at-arms; Marie Donavan, musician and Helen Scarcliff, publicity. There were 30 members enrolled.

The Auxiliary pledges patriotic service to the community and nation — to aid in every possible way with money made from bazaars, suppers, donations and other entertainment the following services: treasure chest, insulin, vapronefrin, canteen books, Christmas gift box, Easter gifts, support of Downey Nursery, hospital fund, veterans craft exchange. The Auxiliary sponsors the annual sale of Poppies and also Girl's State, Girl's Good Citizen and a boy at Bell Cottage, Normal, Illinois, in the Sailors and Soldiers Home.

Gold Star Mothers

Gold Star Mothers of the Auxiliary are Mae Short, Jessie Beck, Dorothy Cackley, Garnet Cross, Mayme Coultas, Jodie Davis, Ethel Fangmeier, Margaret Jupin, Lottie Moslander, Mildred Roll, Amelia Sellers, Maude M. Jones, Polly Ann Kisiah, Mary A. Leininger, Lorena Tomlinson. All Gold Star Mothers are honorary members of the Auxiliary.

1957 Officers

Following is the 1957 list of officers: Hattie Thompson, president; Lottie Moslander, vice-president; Verne Willock, second vice-president; Frances Akin, treasurer; Esther Theobald, historian; Florence Bayne, chaplain; Jennie Ewers, sergeant-at-arms; Patricia Thompson, secretary.

TROOP 177 BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

The first Boy Scout Troop in Mason City was organized at the Presbyterian Church by the Rev. Lord and during the long ministry of the Rev. Walter L. Turney during World War I and the early 1920's grew into an active organization. The troop number then was 77 and the charter was granted through the National Council in New York. Interest in scouting declined following the departure of Rev. Turney. Then Jackson-Keen Post, the American Legion, sponsored the troop. In conjunction with Canton and Havana, funds were raised to establish a Boy Scout camp site north of Havana. This was later found to be too expensive and the Creve Coeur Council was organized in Peoria.

Mason City Rotary Club became the sponsor of the scout troop and the Legion Hall was made available one night each week for scout meetings. The National Council suggested that the Mason City Troop affiliate with Creve Coeur Council and this was consummated. Since that time the troop has had the wonderful facilities of Camp Wokanda, north of Peoria, available for numerous scouting camp-outs. Following the affiliation with Creve Coeur Council the troop number was changed to 177.

Scout leaders of Troop 177 have made outstanding records in the district. In 1939-'40, John Carey was Commissioner. During this time he took four of his patrol leaders, Eugene Fletcher, Leland Hernan, Stanley Martin, and Arthur Claypool on a Western trip. The group traveled in a 1936 Ford, pulling a two-wheel trailer loaded with camping equipment. The first local camp site was on the Tom Brownfield farm near Salt Creek. John Carey and Paul Martinie and the scouts built the cabin of logs. It was sturdy and well-built as it survived several floods when Salt Creek overflowed. Carey and Martinie were scout leaders for many years. Other men who made excellent records as scouters were Robert Burns and Harold Jackson. Jackson with the help of Frank Conrady decided to promote the erection of a concrete block cabin that could not be washed away. The site selected was north-east of Hubly bridge on Salt Creek at the base of the bluff and is seemed that everyone in the community helped to lay at least one block or carry water or mix cement and now the scouts have a very fine two-room cabin and breezeway. Dale Harvey spent several years as Scoutmaster and during the War Lou Herman worked with the boys and then invested Rev. Joe Jensen and Clayton Ainsworth as scoutmasters.

In the many years that Mason City Rotary Club has sponsored the Boy Scouts the organization has had many good fellows acting on the troop Committee. Lou Herman has been a member of the scout orginzation since 1924 and has acted in various capacities from troop member to Representative in the National Council.

Leonard Adams, Scoutmaster; Eugene Fletcher and Carol Lowe, Assistants, are the present leaders with Ben Nafziger as Institutional (Mason City Rotary Club) Representative. Mason City Scout Troop 177 is now experiencing a marked growth in membership, interest and scouting activity.

GIRL SCOUTS

The first Intermediate Girl Scout Troop was organized in 1939 with Miss Dorothy Eulass and Miss Geraldine Smith as leaders.

The 27 charter members were Gwendolyn Reynolds, Mary Gibson, Barbara Ainsworth, Vera Ballard, Janice Johnson, Amy Johanne Housworth, Jean Satorius, Mardell White, Lois Congram, Mary Jane Bandy, Doris Geddings, Anna K. Vaughn, Grace Mathers, Delores Beery, Dorothy Goodin, Rosella List, Wanda Yardley, Delores Wilcox, Marian Stone, Joanne Lager, Marie Ross, Wanda Blessman and Cherie Jane Lowe.

Leaders following Miss Eulass and Miss Smith have been Miss Shirley Stone, now Mrs. Richard Rutledge, Mrs. W. Howard Ainsworth, Miss Marian Stone, Mrs. Clarence Reuss, Mrs. Roy Bishoff, Mrs. Frank Herman, Mrs. Vernon Pruett, Mrs. William Whittaker and Mrs. Charles E. Flinspach.

The Girl Scout Troop is now a member of "The Land of Lincoln" Girl Scout Council, and is sponsored by the Mason City Woman's Club.

Camping is participated in each summer at Camp Widgiwagan at Lake Springfield, Springfield, Ill.

CUB SCOUTS

The present Cub Pack, No. 177, was organized in December, 1955, under the sponsorship of the Mason City P.T A. At that time John Evans was Cubmaster and Dale Harvey his assistant. There were 16 registered leaders and 26 Cubs. When the Pack was re-chartered in December, 1956, it had grown to 18 adult leaders and 37 Cubs. The Pack has been quite active and has aroused real interest in our community. The leaders meet every 2nd Tuesday to have a business and planning meeting. The Cubs and their families meet every 4th Tuesday for a big pack meeting. At this meeting the Cubs present plays and display their handiwork.

In July of this, our Centennial, year the pack is still growing. There are now 22 adult leaders and 52

Cubs. Carl Wilcoxson, Sr., is Cubmaster, with Richard Rutledge and Don Dennis as assistants. Dr. Charles Byerly is Pack Committee Chairman and Vernon Pruett is Secretary-Treasurer. Don List is the Institutional Representative.

Cub Scouts are average boys between the ages of 8 and 11. They are noisy and quite, quarrelsome and pleasant, sad and gay. They are trying very hard to be good scouts and grow into good citizens. To work with these boys is to love them — to help them, a privilege.

BROWNIES

The first troop of Brownies was organized five years ago and was numbered Troop No. 2. Interest in the organization continued to grow and during the past year the movement has developed into three troops — Troop No. 391, girls in the Second grade, with Mrs. Fred A. Proctor as leader, assisted by Mrs. Don Blessman Mrs. Edward Hines, assisted by Mrs. Loren Boyer, is in charge of Troop No. 93, girls in the Third grade. The Fourth grade girls have Troop No. 26 with Mrs. Willis Croteau as leader, assisted by Mrs. Clayton Tisdale.

Brownie Scouts have regular meetings during the school term. The training they receive is preparatory to membership in the Girl Scouts when they reach that age.

MASON CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Mason City Chamber of Commerce was organized in April, 1957, with a charter membership of 110 business and professional people. Directors elected to lead this new organization in a progressive program of business expansion and civic improvement are as follows: R. H. Lawrenz, Jack Warnock, Gene Arnold, directors for one year; Dr. J. T. Brown, Cecil Fore, Bill Charis, for two years and Dr. Fred Blisplinghoff, Lafayette Funk and Wilbur Brinner for three years. Of these men R. H. Lawrenz was elected president, Dr. Fred Blisplinghoff, vice-president and Jack Warnock, secretary-treasurer.

The Chamber has already demonstrated that it will be a most active organization. It has participated in a nation-wide industrial advertising venture to promote the locating of industry in Mason City. The Chamber has also contributed materially toward the advertisement of the Mason City Centennial.

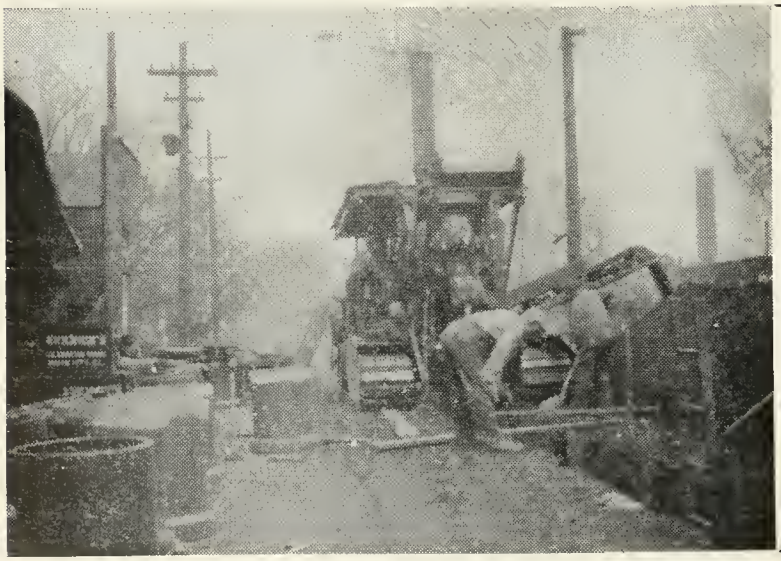
MASON COUNTY HOME BUREAU TO CELEBRATE IT'S 23TH BIRTHDAY

The Mason County Home Bureau, a professional organization for homemakers, has been a leading influence for homemakers in personal and home improvement among the women of the county for the past twenty-eight years.

Miss Nancy D. Judd, Home Adviser

In April, 1929, a group of alert and energetic homemakers became interested in having a professional organization of their own that would offer women the opportunity to study and to apply to their homemaking problems. The County Home Bureau cooperates with the Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics at the University of Illinois and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The first office of the Mason County Home Bureau, in 1929, was located at what was then the Ainsworth Ice and Feed Company building (now Wilkinson's) at 217 East Chestnut Street. The first Home Adviser was Miss Alice Thompson who served from 1929-1932. The



Digging the Ditch For Mason City's Sewer

It was hard to convince some townspeople that Mason City needed a sewer system. But, since it was built in 1919, its value has been proved. Few people now would wish that it had never been built. Some sections of the city are still without sewer privileges; an extension and improvement of the system will probably be Mason City's next move forward.

first county president was Mrs. J. J. Weyhrich of Forest City.

The Home Adviser's office is now located at 124 North Plum Street in Havana. The Home Adviser at the present time is Miss Nancy D. Judd. She is a graduate of the University of Illinois and has served four months as an Assistant Home Adviser in Winnebago and Washington Counties. She had been the Gallatin County Home Adviser from January, 1956, to April, 1957. Her office secretary is Mrs. James Sanmann.

The Home Adviser lives in Havana and supervises the 4-H, Rural Youth, Young Marrieds and the adult educational program of the Home Bureau units. She assists the Home Bureau Executive Board and the Home Economics Extension Council in planning the county activities and program. The Extension Council was organzed in 1956; it is composed of interested homemakers who plan the program of work for the county organization. The Executive Board takes care of the financial and membership duties. The present Executive Board consists of the following women: President, Mrs. Charles Smith, Easton; Vice-President, Mrs. Wayne List, Mason City; Secretary, Mrs. Carl J. Steging, Havana; and Treasurer, Mrs. Gene Hermann, Havana. The Directors are Mrs. Max Tessier, Easton; Mrs. Rudolph Kolves, Bath; Mrs. Noal Ingram, Bath; Mrs. Carl Bitner, Mason City; Mrs. Henry Kastendick, Easton; Mrs. Ralph Porter, Havana and Mrs. Robert Lowers, Easton. The Extension Council is as follows: Mrs. George Knuppel, Mason City, Chairman; Mrs. Emerson Leinweber II San Jose, Secretary; Mrs. Wayne List, Mason City, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Albert Krause Sr., Easton, Publicity Chairman; Mrs. Robert Lowers, Easton, Health Chairman; Mrs. Noal Ingram, Bath, Recreation Chairman; Mrs. Ralph Porter, Havana, Major Projects Chairman; Mrs. Henry Kastendick, Easton, Ways and Means Chairman; Mrs. Carl Bitner, Mason City, Safety Chairman; Mrs. Max Tessier, Easton, Minor Chairman; Mrs. Rudolph Kolves, Bath, 4-H Chairman and Mrs. Charles Smith, Easton, Home Economics Chairman.

Subject matter and training deal with latest information regarding clothing and textiles, food and nutrition, consumer problems, home management, home furnishings, health, child development and parent education. Practical demonstrations are given on all phases of these important subjects at the meetings: each unit having one meeting a month. Regular training schools are held throughout the year, and other social and organization activities such as family parties, annual spring teas, annual meetings, annual play days, open meetings, county picnics, etc., highlight the eleven-month schedule. Attendance at Farm and Home Week at the University of Illinois is also anticipated by the Home Bureau women.

HOME AND SCHOOL CLUB AND P. T. A.

The Mason City Home and School Club was organized in 1947 with Mrs. Ray Werner as the first president.

One of the club's first projects was a mid-morning milk and cookie lunch for all grade school pupils. This continued until the hot lunch program was made available to town children as well as the pupils coming from the rural area.

The inoculation program was sponsored in the school as needed during the years of the club's existence.

Brownie and Cub Scout Troops were organized in 1952 and sponsored by the Home and School Club. One of the last projects of the club was the drive for funds to purchase new uniforms for the Mason City School Band. This club functioned for eight school years and was devoted to the particular needs of this particular community.

Presidents besides Mrs. Werner were Mrs. Russell Hull, Mrs. Carl Tomlin, Mrs. Vernon Dowell, Mrs. Clarence Reuss, Mrs. Charles E. Flinspach, Mr. Gerald Patterson and Mr. T. P. Jennings

In 1955 the club reorganized as a Parent-Teacher Association. Presidents of that organization have been Robert L. McNeil, Paul Stark and for the 1957-'58 term Verlon Elmore.

The P.T.A. continues to sponsor Brownie and Cub Scouting.

MASON CITY JUNIOR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Mason City Junior Chamber of Commerce was formed Tuesday, July 23, 1957 at Christ Lutheran Church. Officers elected were: John Haynes, president; Ray Rabbe, external vice president; Paul Lockenour, internal vice president; Jack Dodson, secretary; Carl Biedenharn, treasurer; Henry Hilst Jr., state director; Kenneth Hanover, Joe Rickard, Don Skaggs and Walter Shawgo Jr., directors.

The Junior Chamber of Commerce (more commonly known as Jaycees) is an independent organization with a membership of young men between the ages of 21 and 35. The members form a cross section of business life in a community — clerks, farmers, factory workers, salesmen, etc. Its purpose is to promote the improvement and developement of the community and also to train and develop the individual members for business advancement and civic leadership.

MASON CITY ROTARY CLUB

Mason City Rotary Club was organized in May, 1926, with 20 charter members. They were: M. F. Ainsworth, Fred Buehrig, George Brinner, W. G. Burnsmier, J. S. Culp, R. D. Culp, L. K. Ellsberry, W. A. Grandy, L. E. Herman, C. E. Huse, W. W. Milby, C. D. V. McKinley, Ben C. Rickard, Dr. H. O. Rogier, J. H. Thompson, J. R. Walker and Horace Whitney.

The first meeting after organization was held May 9, 1926 with Delavan as the sponsoring club and Harry Wood as organizer.

Through its thirty-one years of existence, Mason City Rotary Club has played an important role in the city's history and development. It has been the sponsoring institution for the local Boy Scout Troop for many years and individual members of the club have been community leaders.

Rotary International has as its purpose the promotion of understanding and friendship among businessmen and also between the multitude of nationalities in the world. There are Rotary Clubs and Rotarians in all places of the world not dominated by Communist Russia or Red China. The present international effort of Rotary is to promote international understanding by sponsoring a huge student exchange program in which scholarships are given to outstanding students in all countries where Rotary is allowed to meet.

In local activities it is the policy of Rotary not to be the principal promoter in community enterprises, but, rather to have its members actively engaged in working to make such endeavors successful.

Mason City Rotary Club meets regularly each week on Tuesday at 12 noon. Officers for the fiscal year which started on July 1, 1957 are as follows: R. Clayton Ainsworth, president; R. H. Lawrenz, vice president; Ben Nafziger, secretary-treasurer; Don List, Robert L. McNeil and Charles Jones, directors.

EARLY SETTLERS OF THE MASON CITY COMMUNITY

In every age, sturdy and energetic men and women have left their mark upon the history of Mason City and the surrounding countryside. Following are the names of a few, giving the date they established residence in the area, and their occupation in adult life:

1830 Isaac Engle. First settlement made at Swings Grove. 1837 John Y. Swaar, farmer, Salt Creek Township. 1840 J. A. Phelps, attorney. 1845 Lafe F. Swing, hardware and agricultural implements. Hugh C. McHarry, farmer. 1848 Robert Donavan, farmer, Mason City Township. Henry Cease, farmer. 1849 Alex C. Appleman, farmer. Dr. J. P. Walker, physician and surgeon. L. E. Hole, livery stable. 1850 John W. Pugh, farmer, Pennsylvania Township. J. M. Haughey and Joseph C. Warnock, newspaper publishers. 1851 John McCarthy, farmer. 1852 Dan W. Riner, real estate. 1853 George A. Benscoter, farmer. John H. Mathers, farmer. 1854. Andrew J. Cates, farmer. George W. Ely, farmer, Salt Creek Township. 1855 J. C. Ellmore, farmer. David W. Hilyard, farmer, Teheran. 1856 Dr. J. W. Spear, physician and surgeon. Joseph Fink, farmer. 1857 Original Town of Mason City laid out. Land was owned by George Straut. Surveyed by E. Z. Hunt and John M. Sweeney. J. S. Baner, postmaster 1873-'81. Albert A. Cargill, merchant. John Dietrich, brickmaker and ice dealer. John Van Horn, farmer Pennsylvania Township. John J. Burnham, farmer. William Hibberd, hotel operator. David Dare, blacksmith, built the first building in town. 1858 George W. Campbell, president of First National Bank. Jacob Rissinger, brickmaker and ice dealer. 1859 Royal W. Porter, merchant. David Powell, banker. 1860 David Ellmore, farmer. Dr. W. J. Chamblin, physician and surgeon. 1861-1865 Civil War between the States. 1861 Adam List, farmer. 1862 Adam Zimmerman, tailor. 1863 Richard Proctor, farmer. 1865 Post War period, Soldier's Monument erected. 1866 Allen Bradley, druggist. J. C. Ellsberry, druggist. W. 1. Kincaid, merchant. H. S. Houseworth, blacksmith. Solomon M. Badger, teacher and County Superintendent of Schools. 1867 First train arrives on the Tonica, Petersburg Railroad. J. P. Hudson, Justice of the Peace. J. Frank Culp, undertaker. 1868 D. W. Vickery, farmer. 1871 Dr. J. B. McDowell, physician and surgeon. Otho S. King, banker. W. F. Thompson, furniture dealer and undertaker. 1872 B. H. Ironmonger, miller. 1873 Stephen B. Cross, farmer, Mason City Township. 1874 N. S. Forsyth, grocer. Dr. W. Y. McElmore, dentist, office over Cargill and Woodward Store. R. J. Onstott, books and stationery. 1875 Thomas N. Mehan, lawyer. 1878 John J. Ainsworth, farmer.

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Mason City Chapter The American Red Cross

When war broke out in Europe in 1914 we little realized how great a change was to come into the lives of American citizens. We soon began to take sides. Many had joined the Red Cross by payment of a dollar, and were proudly wearing their pins. April 6, 1917, the United States declared war against Germany.

In darkest hours there rose a cry — "Liberty, sweet liberty, thou shalt not die. Thank God!" They came across the sea, two million men and victory. America helped win the war.

Soon after America entered the struggle a Red Cross chapter was formed in Mason City with J. S. Culp, secretary and W. G. Huse, treasurer. The organization was financed by personal contributions. Sales of all kinds, ice cream socials and men and women both responded to the call. Mrs. John Freeman and Mrs. Allen Bradley were the knitting chairmen. Mention is made of two faithful knitters. Mrs. Jasper Knoles knitted a hundred pairs of socks and a great quantity of toes and heels for the many inexperienced knitters. Mrs. A. V. Hubbard knitted a hundred twenty-five pairs of socks besides sweaters, scarfs, helmets and wristlets. The sewing was in the capable hands of Mrs. W. E. Ainsworth and Mrs. Dan Riner. They were ably assisted by the women of Mason City. The sewing room was in the upstairs room of the Farmer's Bank Building, 129 East Chestnut Stree. The women in the country did their sewing at the Pennsylvania Lane church. Everyone who did his bit helped win the war, and it closed November 11, 1918.

There was quite a sum of money in the treasury. Some was returned to the contributors, some was given to the Salvation Army, the rest was kept in the treasury. In the thirties when banks were closed and the township was out of money, the remainder of the Red Cross money was turned over to Raymond McCreery, the Supervisor of this township. He and his helpers, Mrs. Edith Kemp, Mrs. George Mathers, Harry Houseworth, Walter Coon, Gussie Sievers and Rev. Paul Vincent were the food committee. The committee met every Friday night to sack the beans and cornmeal and get the bacon, lard and syrup ready to be delivered Saturday to nearly a hundred people. The Red Cross furnished flour and new material to be used in making garments for the poor. A layette was made for one new baby. Years afterward, he was decorated for distinguished service in World War II.

Sunday, December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and once again we were at war. The Red Cross immediately became active. The annual Roll Call became a must and money again filled our treasury.

At the East Side School House Mrs. J. W. Ainsworth assisted by Mrs. Addie Palmer directed the women of the town in making surgical dressings and bandages.

Our quota was always filled. Mrs. Addie Palmer was the knitting chairman. Mrs. George Mathers, Mrs. Emma Marshall, Mrs. Fred Saffer, Mrs. Frank Benscoter and Mrs. Maggie Brownfield composed the sewing committee. We made and filled comfort kits for each soldier as he left our community. Then there were hospital gowns, pajamas and bed shirts and garments for refugees to be made. To the Red Cross came the tragic task to notify the families of those who had lost their lives in the service of their country. The Red Cross also exerted every effort to assist veterans obtain leave and arrange transportation when circumstances at home demanded their presence.

World War II and the Korean Conflict are over but we still have the annual roll call. Mason City always meets her quota. Last fall for the first time the Red Cross became a part of the Community Chest. Veterans and their families were aided and three homes that were destroyed by fire were aided by Red Cross.

The present officers are Mr. Cecil Fore, chairman; Mrs. Carl Tomlin, vice-chairman and Mrs. George Mathers, secretary-treasurer.

Red Cross Sale

There wasn't much happiness here in the months of 1918. World War I was in progress and many of the young men were overseas. This picture shows East Chestnut Street just prior to a Red Cross Sale. The wagons lined up in the street were filled with farm produce donated by farmers for the sale.

Boosters

for the Mason City Centennial Celebration

Ralph M. Ainsworth
Guy Brooner and Henry Oldenstadt
Carroll Burnham
Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Burnsmier
Mr. and Mrs. John P. Carey
Pat Cleary
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Corbin
Ray Ewers
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Hanel
James A. Harrison
Henderson-Jennings Funeral Home
Dr. and Mrs. George A. Kudirka
Enola Palmer
Mr. and Mrs. Harry G. Rapp
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Schafer
Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Sommers
Ralph Tomlin
Earl Tucker
Vernon Tucker
Harry Vaughn
Mae Van Velzer
Max Wooldridge
Al-lette Beauty Shop
Andy Gaydosh Service
Arnold Pontiac
Brooks Motor Co.
Dietz Greenhouse
Elizabeth Whitehead Beauty Shop
Hanover's Barber Shop
J & J Service
George A. Pasquel Co.
John P. Carey Hardware
Mac's Radio and TV Shop
Marcum Motor Sales
Maruizza's Candy Kitchen
Mason City Motel
Menard Electric Cooperative
Modernistic Beauty Shop
Ray's Cleaning & Repair
Shipp's Appliance Center
Tackman & Francis
Wilson Gas Service
Wilcoxson Service Station
Windsor Drug Store
Lucky Boy Good Bread
Purity Bakery Co.
Sunbeam Bread

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Cunningham Shoe Store
Deckard & Ermerling
Eaton Lincoln - Mercury
Havana Marine Sales & Service
N & M Bootery
William M. Coppel
Joseph Hobbs
George Strawbridge
Wolter's Drug Store
Goofy Ridge Tavern (Buck and Liz)

LINCOLN, ILLINOIS

Schoen's Shoe Store
Sears Roebuck & Co.

Mason City Cemetery Association

In the early days many farms had small private cemeteries for interment of members of the farm family. Public burial grounds were on land now owned by James Montgomery in Sec. 8, Twp. 21, Range 5, northeast of Mason City and a small plot in the southeast quarter of Sec. 31, Twp. 21, Range 5, about a half mile north of Mason City. The Swing's Grove, Leases Grove, Big Grove and Cherry Grove cemeteries were also in use before Mason City Cemetery was platted.

It is interesting to note that the original name of Cherry Grove Cemetery was "Mason City Cemetery" according to the original plat.

Our own cemetery was started by the City of Mason City buying 40 acres of land from Sarah L. Lamoreaux and husband (Thomas) in August, 1870. The Warranty Deed was filed on January 21, 1871. The land was surveyed for cemetery purposes in December, 1870, by Bently Buxton. The plat was filed in Havana in Plat Book 1, Page 370 on April 7, 1871. The price of this land was $4,000.00

The part of it south of what is now the entrance was plotted and placed into use. At first the entrance was at the southwest corner of the plat and the cemetery was reached by traveling over a road levee from the southeast corner of Mason City.

The land on the west side of the cemetery and between there and Mason City was often under from one to four feet of water and for that reason after some years the City bought the land from the east end of Chestnut Street to the place where the entrance is now located. A roadway was then graded up over the low land to the cemetery.

During the years the Cemetery was operated by the City, the sale of lots and the keeping of records was handled by the City Clerks. Sometimes Cemetery affairs were well handled and sometimes carelessly done as could be expected of changing office holders with political connections.

About 1897, the City by referendum, arranged for the transfer of the management of the cemetery to a Board of Trustees elected by the lot owners who are members of a corporation, not for profit, the charter for which was issued by the State of Illinois. This corporation has had the mangement of the Cemetery from that time to the present.

More Land Required

Of the 40 acres of land, purchased by the City, about 25 acres have been deemed suitable for cemetery purposes and has been sold as burial lots. In 1951 the Trustees purchased a tract of five acres from the Peter E. Elmore heirs on the north side of the platted portion of the cemetery. This land was surveyed, laid out in lots and is now being used for burial purposes.

The memorial gate to the cemetery was presented by Mrs. J. F. Culp in 1914 in memory of her husband.

During the time in which the management has been in the hands of the corporation the finances of the project has increased from a very small beginning to the present standing, wherein the trust funds, interest from which is used only for upkeep, now amount to $30,000.

The business of the association is directed by the Trustees and is conducted on a cash basis almost entirely. The payment for making foundations and for opening and closing graves is made at the time the order for work is issued and the only credit granted by the association is for a lot or part required for immediate use. This the Trustees deem to be a necessity in such cases as the inability to pay for a month or two pending the collection of insurance or the sale of some asset owned by the deceased.

The cemetery employs one person on a year around basis and employs such extra help as is needed.

The keeping of records and sale of lots are the work of the secretary, and the association has excellent records as to the location of interment with information concerning deceased persons interred on each lot. This information is often sought by those finding it necessary to assist in perfecting title and for other historical purposes.

The fact that the Mason City Cemetery Association is a community project and a non-profit organization is appreciated by the patrons of the cemetery. The trustees are repeatedly told by those who observe the condition and care extended that the cemetery compares very favorably with cemeteries in much larger communities, some of which are managed as commercial projects for gain. The association has never levied any assessments on lot owners to assist in the upkeep.

Cemetery Trustees

Present members of the Board of Trustees of Mason City Cemetery Association are: William G. Burnsmier, president; Henry Oldenstadt, vice-president; George Brinner, treasurer; Herman Kastendick and Karl Leiser. J. S. Culp is secretary of the Association.

In Memoriam

The old log cabin, with its puncheon floor —
The old log cabin, with its clapboard door —
Shall we ever forget its moss-grown roof?
The old rattling loom, with its warp an woof?
The old stick chimney, of 'cat' and clay —
The old hearthstone, where we used to pray?

No! We'll not forget the old wool wheel,
Nor the hank on the old count-reel.
We'll not forget how we used to eat
The sweet honey comb with the fat deer-meat.
We'll not forget how we used to bake
That best of bread, the old johnny-cake.

This Centennial Booklet was printed by the Commercial Printing Department of the Mason City Banner Times -- in its 89th year of service to the community.

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